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TO A PICTURE.

BY SUSANNA J.

If, when the days are dark and long,
I seek in vain a theme for song,
Life is not wholly void of grace
While I can look upon thy face.

These smiling features o'er express
Such innocence and happiness
That I could wish what cannot be—
That Time should make no change in thee!

Lady Anne's Double.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE," "PEGGY'S ADVENTURE," "THE SHADOW ON A GIRL'S LIFE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER III.

MAGGIE'S STORY CONTINUED.

HOW Lady Anne has managed it, I cannot tell; but I am to stay with her at Mulchester, and father seems as pleased as I am at the arrangement.

"We shall often come over and plague you, Mr. Dare," she said, standing up in her lovely brocaded gown to speed the parting guest. "If the child were at school—as I dare say she ought to be—she could not do that you know. Take an old woman's word for it—you'll never repent giving her up to me for a time, and you'll thank me for it some day!"

So saying she put out her little hand in farewell, of which I saw nothing but the glitter of jewels. Father was quite as much under Lady Anne's dominion as if she had been a queen; it was so strange that any one should rule father that I looked upon her as little short of a magician, and reverenced her beautiful proud face, with its snowy hair piled high on her dainty head, just as I had pictures of dead-and-gone queens when I was a child.

Without any fuss or any effort I found myself, as the days slipped away, being taught things of which I dimly felt my need, and, though I stood horribly in awe of the masters who came to give me lessons in dancing and music, I learned quickly and with ease.

"Your good father has filled your little with quite enough learning," laughed Lady Anne; "he has left me the task of filling it with folly. But you need not look shocked, child! We must think of the world as well as of ourselves, and not neglect the outside of the cup in our eagerness to make it clean within."

And, knowing that I was at present nothing but clay in the hands of the potter, I waited humbly to be made into any shape fate, in the person of Lady Anne, decided to make me, feeling the while that I had lived with her all my life, and that I should be content to reside with her until I died.

My delight in Lady Anne's "days" was unbounded, for then I could dispense such cake as I had never known before and officiate in a hundred small ways. As she had been a leader of society in the county all her life, her rooms were as crowded now as they had ever been at the Court, and I saw so many people that I forgot all my shyness and fear. I had entirely forgotten my long limbs, too, and was never mortified by hearing my hair called red. Indeed, looking at the rare old pictures in Lady Anne's room, I saw so many heads adorned with hair of that hue that I was quite consoled and even proud of my locks.

One afternoon I was standing with my cake near Lady Anne's chair, when I heard Benson announce a name I had never heard before. It evidently struck pleasantly on Lady Anne's ears, for her face beamed.

"I'm very glad to see you, Colonel Markham," she said brightly. "Where have you been hiding yourself for so long a time?"

"I have just come from town, Lady Anne," was the response; and, looking up, I thought the speaker—who was holding Lady Anne's hand affectionately—had one of the handsomest faces I had ever seen.

But for all that, young as I was, I did not think he seemed at ease, and I am sure he was anxious about Lady Anne, and worried too, though why I could not tell, as he lingered near her, on one pretence or another, till everybody was gone.

"Now, if you'll stay to dinner, you can tell me all your doings in the great city," she remarked graciously. "Dick's room is always ready."

Stupidly enough I felt pleased that Colonel Markham should stay, and listened eagerly for his answer.

"Nothing would give me greater pleasure, Lady Anne," he replied, with grave courtesy; "but I have a long ride before me to-night and an appointment that must be kept. May I say a few words to you first—alone?"—glancing at me.

"Oh, the child counts for nothing!" observed Lady Anne, in her pretty decided way. "Go and pick me some flowers in the conversatory, Maggie; and, if you are good, you shall wear some of them yourself."

The conservatory opened out of the drawing-room, and, as I had once overheard Lady Anne talking to my father, so now I overheard her speaking to Colonel Markham.

"Do you know," he began abruptly, before I was well out of the drawing-room—"do you know the reports that have sprung up about that closed wing of the Court yonder?"

Something in his tone frightened me, for I remembered the words of the old sexton at Sandford and the shudder with which I had listened to them long ago; but Lady Anne's cheerful voice recalled my wandering thoughts.

"I have heard it said that Sir Andrew was very mean to shut up my rooms," she answered, "for they were the oldest and most curious in the whole place. Have you heard only that, Colonel Markman?"

But there was no direct answer to her question, only an awkward pause.

"There's something worse than meanness at the Court, I fear, Lady Anne—there's a secret that I mean to fathom. I know your prudence and discretion, or I shouldn't speak. Tell me—did you bring away all your laces and brocades when you came here, or leave any of them to the old servants?"

Lady Anne laughed, in her cheery way.

"I think some few things were left," she rejoined—"perquisites, you know. But what has that to do with Sir Andrew or the Court? The old servants are all gone, and with them their mistress's cast-off clothes. Is that your secret, Colonel? I fear it is a very open secret indeed!"

"Some one has been making use of those clothes for his or her base purposes, Lady Anne," replied the Colonel hastily; and then his voice changed, and he spoke with great gentleness. "My dear friend," he said kindly, "people say that you have been seen at the Court, looking from the windows of your old rooms. And, by Jove, there's something wrong about it, for I've seen lights there myself at an hour when all are supposed to be safely asleep in their beds!"

Lady Anne seemed to give a little gasp, and when she spoke her voice was very unsteady.

"Do you mean to tell me," she cried, all her pretty, cool, imperious manner gone for the moment, "that for three years this sort of thing has been going on, and no one has had the charity to tell me of it?"

"It has only just reached my ears," was the Colonel's grave reply. "But, from what I can gather, without arousing needless attention, it has been spoken of ever since the first months of Sir Andrew's arrival at the Court. That he has no business to be there at all I never for one instant doubted; but now I'm certain that there's a mystery about the place which I mean to fathom."

"You speak exactly as poor David Carnwath spoke the only time I ever saw him," observed Lady Anne sadly. "Dick took me to his chambers not long before he disappeared so strangely. He was firmly convinced that Sir Andrew's claim was invalid, and inspired me with foolish hopes which were doomed never to be realized."

"David Carnwath," repeated the Colonel thoughtfully—"the barrister who was lost sight of so oddly nearly three years ago?"

"Yes," replied Lady Anne sorrowfully; "and Dick told me I lost a good friend in David Carnwath."

"Lady Anne," exclaimed the Colonel suddenly, "do you know any one who is a good friend enough to you to go and live at the Court, and see what they're up to there?"

Though I could not see her ladyship, I could just picture her bright eyes fixed upon Colonel Markham's face in amazed surprise.

"None of the old servants would be engaged if they tried," she answered; "and it is a thing I couldn't ask."

A sudden thought seemed to strike the Colonel.

"Do you know any one who would go as a governess to Sir Andrew's boy?" he asked hastily. "I heard the other day he was advertising for one."

Lady Anne's voice was very low and troubled as she answered slowly—

"I do not like the suggestion at all, Colonel Markham; but there is only one person who would do such a thing for me, and that one is David Carnwath's sister. I heard from her to-day, and she is in her distant Welsh home, alone and starving."

The Colonel looked at his watch, and said hurriedly—

"I must leave you at once, Lady Anne, or I shall miss my appointment, which is on this very matter. Write to-night to Miss Carnwath, and ask her to go up to town; you and I must meet her there, and explain frankly and fully what we want. Did you ever see her, and is she as trustworthy as her brother?"

"I saw her once in Mr. Carnwath's chambers," replied Lady Anne—"a quiet reserved girl, with a frank intelligent face, very like her brother. If I go to town I must take my child with me, and I did not wish to do that just at present."

"It need only be for a day," was the rejoinder—"unless you are tempted to remain longer. Do not raise objections, Lady Anne, for this mystery must be unravelled, and we must do it! Good-bye, and Heaven bless you!"

Lady Anne moved with him towards the door, while I, seeming to turn from stone to flesh and blood once more, slipped away to a distant corner of the conservatory. They had quite forgotten me.

CHAPTER IV.

In a far-away Welsh village lay the quaint many-gabled house which had once been the home of David Carnwath's family.

His father, the village doctor, had lived, worked, and died there, after seeing his son start, as he fondly hoped, to make a name and a fortune in the great city, and giving to his daughter the soundest education that was within the compass of his slender means.

The first few weeks after her bereavement, Mary Carnwath did not realise in the impossibility of struggling on and eking out the small sum realized by the sale of her father's furniture, and effects by the lessons she had for some time been in the habit of giving, for she was fortunate in finding a home with her old nurse.

But the girl soon saw that she must starve when this slender sum was exhausted, and she exerted herself to get a situation as resident governess amongst the people whom she had lived near all her life. Though David wished her to come to him in London, she would not add to the burden she knew he already had to bear, but preferred laboring alone till she could hear of something by which she could add to her brother's scanty store.

Suddenly the shock of David's mysterious disappearance came down upon her. She never seemed solitary whilst David was left to her, but without him there was not a single creature in the whole world with whom she could claim kin.

If he had died, and she had heard him speak one last word, she might have been able to bear it. To be sure of meeting each other in the great hereafter was one thing; but never to know if they would meet again on earth was another and very bitter thought. The terrible uncertainty so preyed on Mary Carnwarth's mind that, though she did not fall ill or sink under her burden, she lost her power as a bread-winner to a great extent, and had to be satisfied with younger and poorer pupils.

It was just at this crisis in her desperate misery that the thought of Lady Anne Sandford suddenly flashed into her mind. She was dreaming of David as usual, and of his dusty uncared-for chambers in the Temple, when all at once the remembrance of her only visit there, together with that vision of loveliness which had lighted up those dreary rooms in the shape of Lady Anne, dainty and quaint as if she had stepped out of an old picture, rushed into her mind, and she started up with a thrill of renewed hope.

And so it happened that Mary Carnwath wrote to Lady Anne, asking if she knew any one who would give her employment in teaching; and thus, innocently enough, her feeble hands nodded one link in the chain of events that were at a not very distant day to bring to light the mystery that now surrounded the closed wing of Sandford Court.

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One of the offences committed by Sir Andrew Sandford against the village and the country in which his lot was cast consisted in the fact of his utterly ignoring the resident doctor and choosing to be attended by a London practitioner.

"If Doctor Williams wur good enuff fur Sir Stephen an' Lady Anne," said the gossips of Sandford, "he be good enuff sure-ly for him!"

And this expression of feeling was but a faint shadow of the bitterness which lurked in the breasts of the villagers.

But little did the new master of Sandford Court care for for this. He went his own way, disregarding men's feelings and prejudices, with the unswerving steadfastness of an utterly selfish soul, and was despised and hated accordingly.

His carriage—a close one, and drawn by the only pair of horses remaining of Sir Stephen's stud—was driving rapidly to the

railway station at Merton Bassett, where a loop line ran from the county town, to meet Doctor Goschen, the London practitioner, who had incurred such hatred at Sandford. Sir Andrew himself was in the carriage; he was a dark unpleasant-looking man, with none of the affability or honesty of the old race; and there was about him a sardonic and sinister reserve which repelled confidence and provoked suspicion.

As the vehicle drew up with a dash at the little station, the footman got down, touched his hat, and waited for orders. The London passengers were alighting on the unsheltered platform, and Doctor Goschen, bag in hand, came straight to Sir Andrew and took his place beside him in the carriage with a mixture of deference and familiarity inexpressibly odious. But not a word was spoken until the door was closed and they were were driving rapidly away.

Then the Doctor asked a single question, and that was all. It was an odd one, considering there was no report of illness at the Court, and it would have puzzled any outsider who might have heard it.

"Any change for the worse?" was the inquiry. Scarcely less curious was Sir Andrew's reply.

"A change that will give us a great deal of trouble, I fear," he said grimly; and then both men leaned back in their respective corners, and scarcely opened their lips again till their arrival at the Court.

Dinner was announced shortly afterwards, and it was not until the servants had retired that the Doctor and Sir Andrew began to talk in earnest, and then it was in a low tone.

"The crisis we expected has, I suppose, come?" began the former.

"Yes," replied Sir Andrew slowly; "and, now I come to think of the difficulties attending your plan, I wish we had never allowed matters to go so far."

"What else could you do?" said the Doctor softly, fixing his small keen eyes on the Baronet's face. "We went over the subject carefully at the time, and there was no alternative."

"No," snarled Sir Andrew; "I was forced into it, as you say. But it will be a very dangerous thing if he dies here."

"It would be a very dangerous thing if he lived, I should say," was the curt reply. "You've got the coffin all right, I suppose?"

"Yes," was the sullen answer, "and I wish he was in it and out of the house! But how it's to be done I don't know."

"Time enough for that when he's dead," was the cautious rejoinder; "then, as you say, the danger must be faced."

The Doctor looked at his watch, for they had lingered longer than they intended, and it was nearly ten o'clock.

"I think, if you will allow me," he observed, stifling a yawn, "I will go to my room, and at midnight, as usual, I shall be ready to accompany you to the tower."

"Hang it all," remarked the Baronet irritably, "I am getting tired of the life I've led ever since I came here, and feel inclined to wash my hands of the affair!"

"He, he, he!" laughed the Doctor; and he looked so hideous as he did so that Sir Andrew could not help feeling an involuntary chill. "What would become of my leetle annuity if you did that, mine friend?" he inquired, as if the idea was a good joke and he fully appreciated it. "Or what of our agreement for my discreet silence as to certain matters?"

Sir Andrew moved impatiently and rang the bell.

"You can lock up and go to bed as usual, Sims," he said, as the butler appeared with hot water and glasses. "Doctor Goschen is accustomed to early hours down here, and is tired with his journey."

Some two hours afterwards, when the old house was plunged in darkness the two men met at the entrance to the closed wing, and passed stealthily in by the iron-clamped door, the keys of which never left Sir Andrew's possession, sleeping or waking.

Threading their way through tortuous passages and queer galleries, they ascended by a private staircase to the tower where the tapestried chamber and Lady Anne's favorite rooms lay. As they neared their journey's end, a faint moaning sound reached their ears that might, outside those massive walls, have been easily mistaken for the sighing of the wind around the deserted portion of the grand old mansion.

But Sir Andrew and his companion knew too well that no warning of tempest caused that faint piteous sound, and the latter muttered, "That must be stopped;" and then, so complex are the workings of the human mind, both shuddered because all of a sudden the faint sound ceased and all was still.

More callous or physically stronger than his employer, the repulsive looking Doctor halted but a moment, and then, shading with renewed care the dark lantern which he carried, he led the way, guiding himself by the massive wall, to a deep curtained recess which concealed the door to Lady Anne's rooms.

"Listen!" whispered the Baronet hoarsely, grasping his companion's arm; and, as he spoke, again came that piteous moan, but fainter and weaker.

Doctor Goschen took the keys without vouchsafing the slightest reply. Selecting one of quaint and curious workmanship, he inserted it noiselessly in the lock and, opening the heavy door, passed into the stifling and darkened chamber.

Pausing to light a taper which he carried, and which did little more than make visible the faint outlines of a room fitted for human habitation, but withal comfortless and bare, he approached a couch which stood at the farther end, on which lay the form of a woman, dressed in feeble mockery of Lady Anne. She had an emaciated but massive face, and long straggling hair, white as the driven snow. Her eyes were closed, and, save for the faint moaning, she might have been dead for any sign of life about her.

Doctor Goschen took the hand lying nerveless on the coverlet, and turned sharply to his companion.

"Do you want him to die?" he asked in a savage whisper; and, as Sir Andrew threw out his hands in a wordless protest, he curtly demanded such nourishment as the place afforded, pouring between the pallid lips drops of brandy taken from his own pocket-flask.

All possible concentrated foods and meat-essences were in the chamber, so that, after a few minutes of careful tending, the eyes of the woman opened, and she looked up at the face that was bending over her, a faint hue, of life returning the while to her ashen cheeks. But there was neither reason nor recognition in the glance, and when the Doctor said, with assumed cheerfulness, "How are you feeling now, Lady Anne?" she only lifted a feeble hand to her head and touched the long locks of snowy hair wonderingly as they fell in disorder on her rich but faded gown.

For nearly two hours the Doctor and his companion remained in the chamber; and, when they at last left it, the woman had sunk into a profound sleep. Very dark was Doctor Goschen's face as he turned to Sir Andrew after dropping the heavy curtain over the locked door.

"You don't want him to die," he remarked bluntly, "and yet you've starved him!"

"I left food enough within reach," was the sullen answer; "I can't be expected to put it into his mouth, can I?"

"Well, yes, you can," was the abrupt reply, "if he's too weak to feed himself."

"He wasn't too weak the last time I entered that confounded den," answered the Baronet, temper getting the better of his discretion; "and that wasn't many days ago."

"Look here, Sir Andrew," observed the Doctor, with a slow emphasis more impressive than any violence—"you tell me one thing and you mean another. Is this man to die or to live?"

A cold sweat broke out upon the Baronet's face as he answered hoarsely—

"He may live for a hundred years if he likes, but it must be out of this house, for I can bear it no longer. I will not be either his nurse or gaoler."

So saying, he was turning hurriedly down the dark passage when a sudden impulse made him pause.

"Stay with me, Goschen," he said abruptly; "I'm in an awful fix! I must go to London to-morrow, and don't want to find a corpse yonder when I come back. On my soul, I want him to live, and, if you'll stay and keep life in him, I'll make it worth your while. Say you need a holiday, or anything you like, only, for Heaven's sake, don't leave me in this extremity!"

"I'll think of it," was the cold cautious reply, "and I'll let you know my decision at breakfast to-morrow, or, rather, to-day. I'm going to bed now and should advise you to do the same."

* * * * * * *

In old-fashioned lodgings in Jermyn Street, Lady Anne Sandford was presiding at a quaint tea-table, set out in humble imitation of her own. One of her old servants kept the house, and endeavored to copy the old surroundings, because she loved the gracious mistress she had served for the better part of her life.

By her side Maggie, radiant and happy, sat, and, opposite to them, Colonel Markham and Mary Carnwath drank their tea, listening to Lady Anne's sweet imperious voice and eating whatever she was pleased to command; for this was "high" tea, in honor of Miss Carnwath's arrival in town.

Maggie was empowered to superintend the unpacking of Lady Anne's belongings with Morris, her ladyship's maid, while converse deep and mysterious was to be held in her absence by the three persons bound together just now by circumstances as strange as they were perplexing.

"You must not thank me for anything I am doing, Miss Carnwath," Lady Anne observed, hastily stopping the girl's grateful words—"you must not thank me till you know what I'm going to ask you in return."

Mary's face brightened; the thought of doing something for Lady Anne was pleasant to her honest grateful nature.

"Well, my dear," continued her ladyship kindly, "you remember the only time I ever saw you, and how good your brother was in my sore distress when I lost my old home and Dick's place was usurped by a stranger? Do you remember also how sure your brother was that Sir Andrew's claim was invalid, and that he had no right either to the title or to the estates? He said, 'I'll prove it to you yet, Lady Anne, for I believe I've got the clue already in my hands.'"

"Yes," replied Mary dreamily—"those were his very words."

"Well, my dear," said Lady Anne sadly, "the next news that I heard from Dick was that you had lost your brother and I my friend, but how we never knew, and possibly never shall. Now Colonel Markham here, my very good friend, the other day imparted to me an outrageous story. It is rumored that I—Lady Anne Sandford—have been seen, and am seen, at the windows of my old rooms at the Court, and that in these very rooms—closed three years ago by Sir Andrew, together with all the most curious and ancient portions of the building—lights are burning in the dead of night! The theory," continued Lady Anne, "that he founds on this is that some roguery is going on at the Court, and that some one ought, in my interests and those of Dick, to be installed there, and discover, if possible, what this roguery is. Wait a moment, child," her ladyship went on, holding up her little hand; "Sir Andrew has himself paved the way for this. He has advertised for a governess to educate his only child, a boy of eight; I want you to be that governess"—the proud voice faltered and sank to a tremulous whisper—"and a spy, for our sakes!"

It is difficult to say who looked the more moved at these terrible words, Lady Anne or Mary Carnwath. The former was very pale and actually trembled, while Mary's cheeks were the deepest crimson.

"I must go in another name, Lady Anne," said Mary, after a pause. "Call me by any other name you please, I will do this thing for you!"

One thing sorely puzzled the three conspirators. What references would Mary Carnwath offer under an assumed name? Here the girl herself came to the rescue. Jack Redfern, her brother's dearest friend, had chambers still in the Temple. He had been the first to discover David's mysterious disappearance, having a special appointment with him on the very night when he had disappeared, and had exerted himself to the utmost to find a trace of the man he loved as a brother. As a barrister, this friend of David's knew well the keen interest he took in the Sandford pedigree, and would help them, she was sure. Mary turned with a strange gladness to the thought of Jack Redfern's counsel and help.

And truly they had not counted on him in vain. He entered heart and soul into their plans, only questioning whether they could be out by Mary with safety to herself.

Finding her as obstinately bent on going to the Court as Lady Anne herself could desire, Jack Redfern took the matter of references entirely into his own hands.

"I have two maiden aunts," he explained, "whose interest I bespoke only the other day for the sister of an artist I know, who is left utterly destitute. This young lady however was fortunate in obtaining a situation before I could inform my aunts of her success. Miss Carnwath must go to the Court in her name, and my aunt's references will serve our turn. Later on I can explain everything to them, if necessary. They will only read me a long lecture on the wickedness of barristers in general and myself in particular."

Jack laughed; he knew very well that, sinner though he was, his old aunts loved him too well to be really angry at anything he did.

So it was finally agreed that Mary should answer Sir Andrew's advertisement as "Miss Cunningham," and make an appointment to see him as soon as possible.

CHAPTER V.

ONE of the things that had struck Jack Redfern as very strange when David Carnwath's rooms were examined after his mysterious disappearance was the total absence of any letters or papers on the subject of his search into the "Sandford case," as they called it familiarly between themselves.

Nothing but a few notes in cipher, as unintelligible to Jack as they were to every expert to whom he submitted them, could be found in David's chambers, and, wearied and disheartened, the search was abandoned in despair, although Jack was persuaded those notes contained the clue to whatever he had achieved for Lady Anne Sandford, and the impossibility of deciphering them vexed and harassed his soul.

By Mary's request he had locked these papers away in his own chambers, and, after settling matters with Lady Anne and Colonel Markham, he went straight back there. Opening the safe he took out the mysterious notes and sat down with them before him, as if by looking at them for the hundredth time he might be able to discover the key to these unknown characters to master their contents.

But, although he did not succeed in this, something else came of David's strange cipher and the train of thought evoked thereby.

"By Heavens," Jack exclaimed, starting up like a man suddenly awaking from a troubled dream—"the key to their other devilry lies at Sandford Court, and that scamp, Sir Andrew, holds it in his grasp!"

A dark expression came over the bright face of the careless young barrister, and an ugly suspicion formed itself in his mind. That night he wrote to Lady Anne—

"Let no trace of Miss Carnwath's identity go with her to Sandford Court—no linen marked with her name or book with it written in. And, at the first shadow of suspicion on the part of Sir Andrew, let her leave without notice and without warning of her intention. Let her post her own letters, and tell her to have no secrets from you."

Lady Anne mused for a moment over this letter and then put it carefully away.

"Mr. Redfern knows or suspects more than he likes to tell me," she thought; "but a woman's wits are keen, and I shall surprise him yet one of these days."

So saying, and with a little self-satisfied nod, Lady Anne went off to inspect the packing of Mary's modest box and to supply any deficiencies that might be found therein.

* * * * * * *

"The governess has come, Sir Andrew," announced the butler deferentially, as he prepared to retire and leave the Baronet with his wine.

Sir Andrew turned carelessly.

"Let Master Arthur come down," he said; "and, when I ring, request Miss Cunningham to step here."

The man retired, closing the door after him, and then indulged in a sardonic smile.

"I wouldn't be Miss Cunningham," he muttered—"no, not for twenty pun! 'Sims' is good enuff for me, but she must have a handle to her name, though she's neither fish nor flesh. However I pity her!"

With a disagreeable chuckle Mr. Sims went off to send one of the maids for the young heir of Sandford Court.

A very important person was the housekeeper at the Court, Mrs. Wainwright. She was a rather handsome woman, and had been with Sir Andrew, it was said, for many years. It was her policy to keep on good terms with the upper servants, and to allow no dissatisfaction to smoulder amongst any of those under her control. She knew well that there is nothing so dangerous in a household held together only by the bonds of interest.

Once a day she received Sir Andrew's orders, and the mouth of scandal itself could find nothing against these interviews, occupied, as they were, with the respective merits of fish, flesh, and fowl. For the master of Sandford Court was a rigid economist; in other words, mean and grasping to the last degree.

But certain it is, although strange, the housekeeper evinced no surprise at the advent of a governess for little Arthur, and Sims was convinced in his own mind

that she knew it already, and would have told her so if it had not been that most of his unauthorized luxuries depended upon Mrs. Wainwright's favor, and he loved them too dearly to risk their loss by any foolish remarks of his own.

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Meanwhile, how did Mary feel under the roof of the man she had come only to keep watch on and outwit?

She was calm, cold, and utterly unlike the Mary of a week ago. She seemed to be impervious to the slighting manners and covert insolence of the servants at the Court. From her small wardrobe she had taken out a simple gray dress—Lady Anne had rigidly forbidden black or any sign of mourning—and this, with plain linen collar and cuffs, constituted as unpretending a costume as she could possibly have chosen in which to make her first appearance before the master of Sandford Court.

She was a tall slender girl, or rather a woman—for Mary was four-and-twenty—with dark brown eyes and hair, a clear creamy skin, and a determined curve of the lips that showed both power and decision of character.

Sir Andrew looked up as she entered, and, after a momentary hesitation, as if he had half a mind to keep her standing before him in sign and token of her dependence, was about to request her to be seated, when little Arthur, whose instincts of politeness were more pronounced than his father's, left the cake and fruit with which his plate was piled and went quite naturally to her side, taking her hand to lead her to the table. This broke the ice; and the Baronet was perhaps not sorry for the excuse to unbend a little for the child's sake.

"Arthur seems to have taken to you already, Miss—Cunningham," he observed, with a little pause before her name, as if it were too slight a thing with which to load his memory, adding, "I hope you will be able to keep him in order, and at the same time amused and happy."

Mary, moving away from the table, with its display of wine and fruit, sat down quietly at a little distance, with Arthur by her side.

As the Baronet spoke, he glanced at Mary's quiet face, and a curiously unpleasant thrill ran through him. It was a transient feeling—a passing tremor of something akin to fear. But of whom did this girl remind him and why did her presence bring back some dim shadowy remembrance?

The Baronet's lowered tone and comparatively civil manner were possibly owing as much to this faint remembrance as to his desire to please his child; and, when Mary at last escaped to the old-fashioned schoolroom, where generations of Sandfords had mastered the first elements of polite education, it was with burning cheeks and a frantic wish that Sir Andrew had been less condescending.

After this however she saw little enough of him. Her whole time was occupied with Arthur, and she never by any chance accompanied the child on the daily visit he paid to his father and Doctor Goschen, who was spending his holidays at Sandford. All the while however her mind was bent on mastering the intricacies of the old Court. She studied the plan, which hung, neglected and dusty, in a passage near the gun-room, and a dim idea began to form in her mind of a watch she intended to keep and of a place wherein she knew perfectly well she could conceal herself.

Arthur, delighted to show her the wonders of the picture galleries and armory, drew her anxiously away from the dark iron-clamped door which led into the closed and older portion of the ancient building.

"There's a bogie who eats up little boys there?" he whispered in Mary's ear, as he clung fearfully to her dress. "Only we mustn't tell papa, or he would be dreffully angry! He thinks I don't know; but I do, 'cause I heard Nurse and Betty talking about it when they thought I was asleep."

"There are no such things as bogies, Arthur," Mary said; "they are only invented to frighten little boys when they are naughty."

"But I wasn't naughty, Miss Cun'ham," persisted the child; "and they didn't know I heard what they said. Betty was telling Nurse that a funny old lady walked about there, and Nurse said it was very queer, and she hoped she'd never see it; and then Betty said papa had got the key of that door, and never let any one open it. When they went down to supper, I was frightened, for I was afraid to tell Nurse I had been listening. But I'd tell you anything," added the little fellow, putting his arms round Mary's neck, "'cause I know you're never cross, and I love you!"

Each word the child spoke caused Mary a pang; but she held to her purpose. They were looking at some gigantic suits of armor that had been taken to the old hall as fitting ornaments to its ancient splendor, and Mary was examining the fastenings of casque and visor of one of them.

She was gradually becoming convinced that, whatever secret lay concealed in Lady Anne's closed rooms, no communication was held with them during the daytime by means of that iron-clamped door.

Doctor Goschen, sauntering away his holiday visit, spent much of his time in fishing. A lovely trout-stream ran through the home meadows attached to Sandford Park, and here, often with a luncheon-basket beside him, the ill-looking Doctor might be seen, intent on fly and line, and, though a devoted angler, he was not a particularly successful one.

Mary and her young pupil had frequently come across him without intending it, and the child shrank instinctively from his unlovely looks. Mary, when compelled to utter some commonplace civility in answer to his notice of herself and Arthur, had in looking at him fathomed the dark mean nature revealed in his shifting and furtive glances.

"If there is a secret here," she thought, "that man is mixed up in it; he has the face of a murderer!"

Having once made up her mind that whatever watch she kept on Lady Anne's rooms must be at night, Mary's thoughts centred themselves on the way she could attain her object unknown and unseen.

So, when she had clasped and unclasped the casque and visor of the gigantic suit of mail which stood near the locked door, she made up her mind with the swift decision which sometimes seems like inspiration that into this armor she would creep and watch night after night.

CHAPTER VI.

MAGGIE'S STORY CONTINUED.

"Dick's room is always ready!"

These words rang in my ears all through Colonel Markham's interview with Lady Anne, and I have never forgotten them.

Lieutenant Sandford had seen some hard fighting. The war was over, so that he really might return at any moment, and my heart was and my cheeks glowing at the thought of seeing my old playfellow once more.

I had now been three months with Lady Anne, and I knew I was no longer quite an ugly duckling, but of course very far from being a swan. I took a long survey of myself in the glass before I went down to dinner on the day of Colonel Markham's visit, and I felt sadly enough that there was plenty of room for improvement. How could I hope that Dick would think much of my tawny locks, over the untidiness of which Lady Anne's maid daily groaned? And what would he find to admire in my childish face, which some people called pale and some fair, but which always seemed to me all eyes?

This was my state of mind one evening after we returned from London, and I felt particularly cross and discontented with myself. I went slowly down to the drawing-room in a white cashmere gown, feeling very small and humble indeed.

The lamps had not yet been lighted, and the dear old room was partly in shadow, partly illuminated by the glow of the piled-up cedar logs, the light from which, I suppose, fell upon me as I entered, for somebody jumped up, exclaiming, "Maggie!" and Dick—my Dick—only bigger, browner, and altogether more manly, took me in his arms and kissed me in a sort of rapture.

"Oh, Dick!" I cried, looking up at him in speechless joy as he put me from him and held me out at arm's length to look at me. And then something in his face brought the warm blood rushing to my cheeks, and I slipped from his grasp in a tumult of breathless confusion and sweetest shame.

But Dick was neither confused nor ashamed. He came to my side and looked down at me with happy eyes.

"My little darling," he said softly, "you're a woman now, I see, and I am a big unmannerly brute! But I couldn't help it, Maggie. You'll forgive me and love me a little, darling, for you're my sweetheart and my queen, just as you were in the dear old days at Abbot's Cray!"

* * * * * *

Having once made up her mind, Mary resolved to execute her daring project without loss of time. She had heard from Arthur that the "ugly black man," as he designated Doctor Goschen, had asked him what present he would like before he—the Doctor—returned to the city wherein he lived, and how angry Arthur had made his papa by saying he didn't want any present, and wouldn't have one; and her instinct told her that with the Doctor's leave-taking a crisis had come.

Sitting alone in the old schoolroom after the child had been sent to bed, Mary formed her plan of action with a calm resolution which now seemed to mark everything she did. Retiring to rest as usual at ten, the girl extinguished her light, and lay down on the outside of her bed for fully an hour and a half, with every sense on the alert.

When the last chime of the half-hour before midnight sounded from the old turret-clock at the farther end of the wing, Mary arose to prepare for her dismal watch. There was a waning moon, but there was sufficient light to guide the girl through tortuous passages of the old mansion, although she took the precaution to provide herself with a little lamp. Over her dress she put a black waterproof, which took up no room and left her limbs free.

Noiselessly she turned the key in her door and slipped it into an inner pocket of her dress, and then she flitted down the dim passages. Often strange sounds broke the silence, and rats, which had made their home within the mouldering walls, fled swiftly at her approach.

At length she gained the carved-oak gallery which crossed and led into the majestic hall, and glided down the shallow polished stairs into the gloom below. She crossed the floor, black with age, and, guided by the moonlight which struggled faintly through the stained-glass windows, she made at once for the gigantic suit of mail standing hard by the iron-clamped door. For a moment her trembling hands refused their task, and the girl's heart sank with a deadly fear of failure. But the sound of stealthy steps in the distance restored her fleeting courage, and braced her with desperate resolution to slip into her place of hiding.

Hardly had the last clasp been fastened when a dim light gleamed through the gloom, and two figures advanced from the darkness, each wearing a long black cloak. About midway in the old hall they halted and spoke in low smothered tones.

"I couldn't speak in those confounded passages," said a voice, whose grating tones no whisper could conceal; "but here at least no one can come within earshot to pry and listen! Is to-morrow to end all this?"

"That rests with you," answered Sir Andrew savagely. "You leave Sandford to-morrow. Can I depend on your coming back at midnight?"

"Yes," replied the Doctor emphatically—"yes, if the thousand pounds in notes and gold are put into my hands before I start. Without that little proof of confidence, my very good friend, our charming arrangement must fall through, as you know well enough without any words of mine."

"Look here," rejoined Sir Andrew hoarsely, "I'll give you five hundred to-morrow morning and the rest when the work is done! Why should I trust you any farther than you trust me?"

"I might answer," returned the Doctor sneeringly, "that you trust me because you can't help it; but I won't. I trust you. It is your own interest to keep your word, and therefore you'll do it. Meanwhile I'm not going to stand here shivering all night. I'll tell you what you've got to do, and what I mean to do. You will give him the sleeping-draught—how or when you'll have to find out for yourself—and at midnight I'll bring my own trap back and put it up in the cow-shed by the home meadows. Then I'll come and help you with my Lady Anne, for we shall have to carry her. What may you be using the coffin? It would make a capital litter!"

"Use what you will," growled the Baronet savagely, "only remember you'll have to take it to London with you. But are you going to stand here all night? If you're afraid of the cold, we'd better go yonder at once."

"It is not much warmer there," retorted the Doctor, moving stealthily forward to the iron-clamped door, whilst Mary, stung almost to madness by the vision conjured up by these cruel words, clenched her hand and kept back by sheer force the cry of rage and despair that strove to burst from her lips.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

IN JAPAN.—In Japan small children of the poor who have the gift of straying and no nurses to look after them are safeguarded by the simple precaution of hanging labels round their necks which tell their names and addresses.

Bric-a-Brac.

IN JAPAN.—A Japanese audience when they wish to express disapproval of a bad play, do not hiss or hoot, or make any hideous and inconvenient noise; they merely rise to their feet and turn their backs to the stage, upon which the curtain immediately descends, and the play is forthwith tabooed.

ALCOHOL.—In some countries, particularly in Alsatia, a considerable quantity of alcohol is produced from plums and cherries by fermentation. A very pleasant wine is made from plums. In the South of France they are mixed for this purpose with honey and flour, and in Hungary with apples.

BRIDES.—Prospective brides may be interested to learn that there are 32 days in the year on which, it is said, it is unlucky to marry. They are January 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 10, 15, February 6, 7, 8; March 1, 6, 8; April 5, 6, 7; June 7, 15; July 5, 19; August 11, 19; September 6, 7; October 6; November 15, 16, and December 15, 16, 17.

MASONS.—Bulgarian masons have a curious practice. To ensure, as they imagine, the solidity of the houses they build, they measure with a reed the shadow of the first person who passes after the digging of the foundation has been completed. When the foundation is commenced, this reed is buried under the first rock, usually the corner-stone.

THE TRUTH.—In examining men desirous of joining the Royal Marines of the English army recruiting officers are directed to pay special attention to the condition of the teeth of a candidate. Seven defective teeth, or even less if they impair the biting or grinding capacity, will render a candidate ineligible, and the examining medical officer is directed to take into special consideration the probability of the teeth lasting.

RUSSIAN HOTELS.—Accommodation is meagre in the small hotels of Russia. The rooms contain two broad benches or sofas, on which there is a covering of straw, held in place by coarse cotton cloth nailed along the edges of the board. These benches serve as beds, and each patron is expected to provide his own bed-clothing from the rugs and wraps carried in his tarantass (Russian carriage). This is the custom through the interior of Russia. It is only in the cities that one can find beds in conformity with Western ideas.

FOR A CHRISTMAS DINNER.—North Clifton in Nottinghamshire, England, is situated on the banks of the Trent, and boasts of one custom the like of which exists probably nowhere else in England. There is a ferry across the river, and if you and I, gentle reader, wished to go from one side of the stream to the other, we could do so on payment of a fee. But the Cliftonians are a favored folk, and are entitled to the free use of the ferry on the condition that they give the ferryman and his dog their dinner at Christmas. As Christmas comes but once a year the boatman would seem to have made a very bad bargain. Let us hope he gets a generous meal and wish him a merry Christmas—not forgetting the dog.

"TIT FOR TAT."—Professor Skeat, in his "Etymological Dictionary," explains the expression as "blow for blow," and says that it is a corruption of tip for tap, where tip is a slight tap. He refers to Bullinger's "Works," the translation of which is, I believe, dated 1577. May I be permitted to direct attention to the fact that "tit for tat" had already appeared at an earlier date in John Heywood's "Proverbes," 1546?

Since tat for tat (quoth I) on even hand is set,
Set the hares head agaynst the goose giblet.

Pp. 109-110, reprint, 1874.

In a note it is stated that "tit for tat" is simply a corruption for tant pour tant. Halliwell-Phillipps's "Dictionary" has "Tint for tant," tit for tat.

TALLER THAN THE STEEPLE.—In London city, in Leadenhall Street, there is a church bearing the strange name of St. Andrew Undershaft, a name that would not be intelligible to anyone without a knowledge of the history of the locality. It seems that some four hundred years ago, every May Day a high shaft or pole was set up opposite the south door of St. Andrew's and adorned with flowers. So tall was the pole it was actually higher than the church steeple, which was therefore literally under the shaft. Now, there being several churches dedicated to St. Andrew, this one was further described as Undershaft to prevent it from being mistaken for any of the others. The old maypole having been denounced as an idol by an over-zealous curate in the reign of the boy-king, the inhabitants of the district sawed it in pieces for firewood. Thus is it that in the name of a still existing church is preserved an interesting bit of bygone history, which otherwise would probably have passed away for ever.

DAVID GIGLIONE, an Italian, who became a naturalised citizen in Hartford, Conn., went to Italy to bring a member of his family to this country, and was arrested as a deserter from the Italian army, and his wife wants our State Department to do something towards securing his release.

TELL ME.

BY SYLVESTER CLARENCE.

Tell me, love, I am not dreaming,
Am not cruel Fancy's sport;
Tell me this is more than seeming,
Bliss by no delusion wrought.
Do I see thee now before me?
Do I clasp this hand in mine?
Or has some potent spirit o'er me
Cast a spell almost divine?
Tell me, love, I am not dreaming.

All the bitter past has brought us
Drown'd beneath Time's flowing wave;
All the ills that foes have wrought us
Buried in one common grave;
Leave our future all unclouded,
Brighter for the perils past;
Long by grief and sorrow clouded,
Love dissolves the spell at last.
Tell me, love, I am not dreaming.

IN PERIL'S MIDST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PENKIVEL," "OLIVE VAROOR," "BY CROOKED PATHS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A SOLEMN silence fell upon the group after Nora's momentous "Yes!" Mrs. Burns stood with uplifted hands, the girl at the door opened her eyes, and her mouth still wider, if that were possible, and Senley Tyers, sallow and saturnine, looked from Nora's downcast face to Vane's stern one with a curious expression.

He was the first to awaken from the stupor which seemed to have fallen on them all. Taking up his hat, he motioned to Mrs. Burns to leave the room, and softly followed her, closing the door after him.

Vane took Nora's hands and drew her towards him. Her face was pale with excitement, and his smile flickered and wavered.

"Well, Nora, well, little one?" he whispered.

She did not raise her head, but stood passive, silent, motionless.

His eyes dwelt upon her with a mixture of tenderness and admiration. In her womanly garb, in the plain print dress, she looked so different to the boy Ernest, so like the Nora of the Witch's Cauldron, that the period during which she had been masquerading seemed like that of a dream and as if it had never existed. Even in that moment of intense excitement and bewilderment he realized how lovely the pale face, how exquisitely graceful the slim, girlish figure were.

"She is my wife," echoed in his heart, joined with her softly, timidly whispered "Yes," and the two sentences made a strangely sweet music in his ears. How would it be with him if she really were his wife?

The question set the blood tingling warmly in his veins, made his heart beat as assuredly it had never beat before.

Beautiful, lovely! Why, yes, he had known that—he had recognized that fact the moment he had seen her out there on the wild West Coast; but not until this moment did he realize how loveable—and, believe me, that is better, far better than being lovely—she was!

She had been his constant companion for weeks, and they had never had a cross word. Never in all his life had he been so happy, so much at peace with himself and all the world, so content with life, as he had been with "Ernest Mortimer."

"Well, Nora," he said again in a low voice, "what do you say to it all?"

Then, as she still remained silent, he went on—

"Are you angry with me? Are you sorry for what I have done? It—it was the only course. You—you don't quite understand, perhaps; but indeed it was the only thing to do."

Did she not understand? Ah, if he had known how well, how far too well, she understood, he would have spoken very differently, and the game of cross purposes would have come to an end there and then!

"You see," he stammered on, man-like misinterpreting her silence, "if—if I hadn't done this, made a grand coup of it, these people—this Mrs. Burns and her daughter—would have cackled and jawed their heads off and made no end of a fuss. You see that, don't you, Nora? Come, say you are not angry with me?"

With her face still hidden from him, she murmured—

"I—am not angry."

He was only half satisfied, it seemed.

"But are you sorry, little one?" he asked tenderly.

"Sorry?" she repeated almost inaudibly. "No. It does not matter."

"Does not matter?" he echoed, looking puzzled. Then he put his arm round her, and drew her closer to him. "Does not matter? What do you mean, Nora? I'm—you didn't think it was only play-acting, that I didn't mean what I said, that I only said it to get us out of the scrape and quiet these people?"

His voice was grave, almost stern, notwithstanding its tenderness.

She raised her eyes slowly, painfully, to his face, as if she hoped to read his heart at a glance, then her eyes fell again.

"You didn't think that?" he said. "Why, Nora, I meant it, meant it for now and for ever."

"Meant that I——?" she faltered.

He pressed her hand in a tight grip and pressed her face close to his breast.

"I meant that you should be my wife," he said. "If you will, if you will, dear?"

"Your wife?" The roar of the sea seemed to be surging in her ears, the cottage room spun round with her. "Your wife?"

"Why, yes!" he whispered. "What else could I mean? And—listen, Nora dear—the thought, the mere idea of it, sends me half mad with delight! Yes, to-morrow, if we can manage it—I must ask Sen, he know's everything—we will be married in the proper and usual manner."

"Married!" she echoed faintly.

He laughed at what he took to be her consternation at the suddenness of the proposal.

"Certainly. There mustn't be any delay. We mustn't give these people any further excuse for gossip and scandal. You and I and Sen will go off to the nearest big town to-morrow and, if it's possible, you and I will be married. Are you frightened, dearest?" he asked, for he could feel her form trembling in his embrace. It's awfully sudden and startling, I know, but you're too brave and plucky to be upset—you, my brave little Nora, my little witch! Look up, dear, look up and——" his voice dropped to a caressing whisper, "and give me just one kiss to seal the bond. Just one, Nora!"

She raised her head and looked at him, an inscrutable expression in her dark eyes; inscrutable then, but he learnt afterwards to understand it. Slowly she put her lips to his and kissed him. The blood ran still more warmly through his heart; he pressed her to him and kissed her lips, her eyes, her hair.

"My dear little one, my witch!" he murmured.

There was silence for a moment; then he said—

"Are you happy, Nora, tell me?" and he took her face in his hands, and scanned it with all a man's anxiety to assure himself that his love is returned.

For an instant, an instant only, she allowed the passion that filled her heart to flash from her eyes, then she cast them down. It is just possible that, man-like, he missed that glance—a woman would not have done so.

"Yes, I am happy," she said in a low tremulous voice that had a tone of sadness in it, for all her avowal.

"And so you shall be!" he exclaimed. "Look here, Nora, you've made an awfully bad bargain, but I'll make it as good as I can for you. I'll do my best to keep you happy, little one. We'll go away somewhere and live by ourselves, just as we have been doing down here in this jolly little Scotch place. We'll just live for each other, as they do in the novels," he laughed and passed his hand caressingly over her short curls, "and you shall let this beautiful hair of yours grow again—every day I've seen you I've felt wild at your cutting it off—and—and be the Nora of old, the wild little savage girl I first saw at the Witch's bridge. Do you remember, Nora?"

He laughed; his face was glowing with happiness and content. The strange feeling of elation, joy, still possessed him fully. He did not notice that her face was still pale, that she kept her eyes out of the sight of his. Men are selfish, the best of them, and at the best of times, and his own happiness absorbed him.

"Oh yes, we'll have a good time of it, little one!" he went on, "we'll go abroad for a bit, as I proposed to Sen. By the way, how did he manage to hit upon the truth, to learn our secret?"

She was silent, and he laughed carelessly.

"It doesn't matter. Come to think of it, it is wonderful that he didn't discover it at first; Sen is such a sharp, clever fellow. It's lucky that it was he and not someone else who found us out, isn't it? Because, you see, Sen can be trusted. He'll keep as silent as the grave. You'll see he won't even speak of it to me; he'll just behave as if there never had been such a person as 'Ernest Mortimer.'"

She shivered slightly and, of course, he noticed it.

"You are not afraid, Nora?" he asked quickly. "You are not afraid that—that—the truth will ever get out? How should it? When we come back to London your hair——" he kissed it, "will have grown again, and you will be dressed as a woman—how well Mrs. Burns' girl's dress suits you!—and no one will ever dream of connecting you with 'Ernest Mortimer.'"

He drew her to a chair—she was trembling still—and she sank down at his feet, and resting her arm on his knee, hid her face on it.

They remained thus almost in silence for a time. To Vane the realization of the truth—that he loved this girl as passionately as ever woman was loved by man—was coming home slowly but surely, more surely every moment.

He looked forward to the morrow with impatient eagerness, to the future with delight. Was there in all the world any girl so beautiful, so loveable, as this girl-woman whom he had discovered—yes, he had discovered her!—in the western wilds?

Was there any girl so pure, so innocent? Why, the very escapade which might have ruined her had been the result of her innocence and ignorance of even the existence of evil! Yes, he would make her happy! The rest of his life should be devoted to keeping her purity unstained, untroubled.

A kind of solemnity fell upon him, the sort of feeling one is conscious of in some great cathedral. Compare her with the women of the world, the women he knew! How soulless, how ignoble they seemed beside this pure-minded, tender-hearted, unselfish child of the wild sea coast!

He bent and kissed her reverently.

"My dearest, my—wife!" he murmured.

The kiss, the embrace seemed to rouse her.

A shiver ran through her as if she were awaking from some blissful dream to the cruel reality of the real world. She rose and stood with clasped hands looking at him, her lips parted as if she were trying to speak, but no words would come, and he took her hands and held them.

"You are tired, Nora?" he said, understanding to some small extent how the scene must have tired her. "You would rather like to go upstairs and rest? You would rather not see Sen again to-night?" He made the suggestion with a sense of saying the right thing, and nodded with loving considerate encouragement. "Very well, you shall not. He and I will talk it all over and arrange for the—the wedding. He smiled. "Good night, Nora; good-night, my—wife!"

She let him hold her for a moment or two, then she slowly drew herself away and left him.

Outside, Senley Tyers leant against the cottage and smoked his cigarette. They say that the devil looks after his own; if that be so, most certainly Senley Tyers' master had come to his assistance in a most efficient manner that evening.

As he lounged there, listening to the murmur of Vane's voice, he was filled with amazement at his own luck. If he had arranged the denouement in all its details it could not have been more satisfactory from his point of view; and now, if only the girl could be persuaded to act like the idiots most girls are—these were his thoughts, not mine—all would go swimmingly.

He heard the room door open, and turning quickly beckoned to Nora.

She hesitated a moment, then moved out towards him.

He put his hand on her arm and glanced towards the window with a warning gesture.

"I was right, you see," he said in a whisper. "He will marry you, and now I suppose you are satisfied?"

She raised her eyes and met his mocking, half amused, half contemptuous gaze steadily.

"Oh, I don't blame you," he went on, as if she had spoken; "ninety-nine girls out of a hundred would jump at the chance. It's only the hundredth that would be capable of sacrificing herself for the man she loved." He looked at her keenly as if to see that she understood. "And perhaps even she, the hundredth, wouldn't understand that in sacrificing herself she was also escaping from untold misery."

He was silent a moment or two, then continued in a reflective voice as if he were communing with himself—

"I've seen several of these marriages, and upon my soul, my dear Miss Trevanion, I haven't known which to pity most—the man who had persuaded himself that he loved the girl, but soon found out his mistake, or the girl who found herself married to a man who was tired of her and—ashamed of her."

Nora's breath came fast, and she pressed her hand to her bosom as if every word of the soft, cynical voice stabbed her.

"Because that is what always—always, my dear young lady—happens. He is bound to get tired of her, bound to grow ashamed of her. How can it be otherwise? And then——" he knocked the ash off his cigarette, and looked up at the sky with pursed lips and raised eyebrows. "Then there's the deuce to pay. I know one woman, the wife of one of these unequal marriages—she was a farmer's daughter, and the man was a gentleman of birth and good position—who poisoned herself. Yes, Miss Trevanion, she preferred death to the daily misery of living with a man who had grown to hate the sight of her and wished her dead."

Nora still looked at him, but with eyes that did not see him.

"But don't let me discourage you, my dear Miss Nora," he said in the same soft whisper. "After all, you may be luckier—though, By Jove, I don't think you've much chance. You may marry my friend Vane, and be happy ever afterwards. Who can tell? At any rate, he has done the proper thing in sacrificing himself. It's true he couldn't do anything else; I should have done it myself, I should indeed, I assure you!" with a half mocking inclination towards her motionless figure. I daresay he thinks that he is in love with you—I should think so—and it's something more than pity for you that——"

He had driven the steel home. She raised her hand and struck him across the lips. It was not a heavy blow—there was not much strength left in the sorely tried frame—but it dashed the cigarette from his lips and caused him to swear. He looked up at her, into her blazing eyes, then raised his cap without a word. It was the involuntary homage of a bad man to a noble, pure-hearted woman tortured into resistance.

Also without a word, she turned and entered the cottage. She went slowly up to her room, supporting herself by the hand-rail. The fire which had sprung up within her at Senley Tyers' mocking words died out almost as quickly as it had flared up. She fell on her knees beside the bed, exhausted, powerless, but only for a moment or two. The cruel words followed her, rang like demoniacal laughter in her ears; goaded her. She rose, felt her way to the candle, lit it, and bathed her face in cold water. With a shudder she took up the serge suit, but dropped it with a half articulate moan of loathing. If her life depended upon it she could not wear the things again. She found a cloak and hat in the wardrobe, putting them on, extinguished the candle, and slowly, noiselessly moved across the room and down the stairs, locking the door after her.

The outer door was still open, and Senley Tyers' figure was still there. He either saw or heard her, however, for he drew back into the darkness out of the light of the window, as if to assure her that she was safe from any interference from him.

She paused at the door of the living-room, and stretched out her arms with a gesture of farewell too terrible for words. It seemed as if she could not tear herself away. Her hand felt as if it were drawn to the handle; but she pressed it hard against the bosom, bent and kissed the panel of the door, and, drawing the cloak over her face, as if to shut out even the mental vision of the dearly-loved from within the room, hurried out into the darkness of the night.

Senley Tyers, softly dabbing his lips with his silk handkerchief, watched her go with a smile of triumphant satisfaction. He raised his cap again and waved a kiss to the departing figure as it was swallowed up in the shadows.

"Good-bye, Miss Nora!" he murmured. "Upon my word, I am half inclined to bring you back! You are superb, bewitching! Yes, I pity Vane! I pity him! Love him! Why, you fascinating little dence, I'm more than half in love with you myself!"

He carried the pocket handkerchief to the light of the window to see if there was any blood on it—there was a spot or two—then with a shrug of shoulders went inside.

Vane was smoking furiously, a smile—a smile of subdued happiness—on his hand-

some face, a light "entirely new and original" in his eyes.

"Hallo, Sen!" he said. "Come in! I beg your pardon, but I quite forgot you were out there. Forgive me! Come and sit down, old man!"

He took his friend by the shoulders and gently forced him into the chair, and stood looking down at him with his happy, glowing eyes. "Well, you don't want to ask any questions, I suppose?" he said. "You know all, as they say in the play; and I'm sure you'll congratulate me and wish us happiness, Sen."

Senley Tyers nodded with a grave smile.

"Of course you'll think I ought to tell you the whole story," Vane went on; "but I'll get you to excuse me, I think. Not that you wouldn't understand," he added quickly. "You know her too well to—to think ill of her. But come, Sen, don't you think I'm a deuced lucky fellow? Is there any girl half so beautiful in all the world?"

He put the question with a burning ardor, and began to pace the room, emitting great clouds of smoke. "But her beauty's only the small part of it," he continued. "It's herself—herself, Sen! And I was such a fool as not to—to know my own mind till to-night! And yet I did! In reality I did; I've been in love with her ever since the night I saw her——" He stopped. Not even to Senley Tyers could he speak of those days—days which his love had now made sacred. "And I've to thank you—yes, thank you—for letting the light into my benighted mind, Sen," he said, pausing a moment to strike Tyers on the shoulder in an affectionate way. "But for your finding us out—discovering the truth, Sen—I might have gone blundering on for heaven knows how long without discovering that I loved her."

His voice dropped as he spoke the words—dropped and softened with the tender reverence of the strong man.

"To think," he went on in a low voice, "that I should never have guessed it! and—and yet there were times—when she was out of my sight for a little longer than usual—when I half guessed it. What an idiot I was! I know what I ought to have done; I mean when she came to me—my true, sweet, brave little girl! I ought to have married her at once."

Senley Tyers looked thoughtfully at the fire.

"Perhaps it was well you did not," he said very quietly.

"Eh?" said Vane; he had scarcely heard him; he was absorbed, lover-like, in thoughts of his mistress. "What do you say? Why not?"

"I was thinking of Nora—Miss Trevanion," he replied. "You might have known your mind, but she may not have known hers."

"Eh?" said Vane again. "Do you mean that—that she didn't care for me, then?"

Senley Tyers was silent a moment.

"If you ask me, I do," he said. "Look here, my dear Vane, you must see, yourself, that if she had cared for you in the way you mean, she would not have come to you. Her very innocence and purity would have prevented her!"

Vane puzzled over this for a moment.

"I see. You are right. You are right, Sen, as usual, of course! She wouldn't have come if she had known that she—she cared for me; but you think she cares for me now, don't you?"

The color rose to his tanned face, and a happy confident light shone in his eyes as he put the question. He waited, and a faint surprise grew in his eyes at Senley Tyers's delay.

"Well!" he demanded. "Why don't you answer? I say, you think she cares for me now?"

Senley Tyers stared thoughtfully at the fire and pursed his lips.

"I'm not sure that she does," he said.

CHAPTER XXVII.

VANE started, and looked at him with surprise and no little anxiety.

"Not—care for me?" he said, and the happiness in his face clouded for a moment.

Senley Tyers looked at him gravely.

"My dear Vane," he said, "you asked me a question, and I felt bound to answer it, not with the ordinary, commonplace politeness, but with the frankness and truth which are your due from me. I am your friend—your friend—you see, and that rather handicaps me."

"But—but what makes you think she doesn't care for me?" said Vane earnestly.

Senley Tyers shrugged his shoulders.

"You ask me my reasons; I would rather not give them," he said. "I may be wrong—who shall say? Don't put inconvenient problems for your true friends to solve, my dear Vane. Be content with the good the gods have given you, and don't look too closely at it. Be content. I wish you every happiness—whether you will get it is quite another thing—and I congratulate you from the bottom—or the top, whichever you prefer—of my heart. Miss Nora Trevanion is all your loverly enthusiasm declares. She is as good as she is beautiful, and—if she is to be your wife, I—well, frankly, I envy you. There! Now sit down, if you can, and enjoy your pipe like a natural being!"

Vane's face cleared, and he laid his hands on Tyers' shoulders and swayed him to and fro playfully.

"Thanks, Sen, thanks for your good wishes; and—frankly, as you say—I attach more value to them, and to the kindness that prompts them, than to your croaking. Candidly, if you were to tell me plump that Nora did not care for me I shouldn't believe you!"

And he laughed as he took to pacing the room again.

"That's all right," said Senley Tyers with a gesture of his hands, as if he washed them of all responsibility. "That's the true and proper lover's mood. And you'll be married to-morrow?"

"Yes, or as soon as possible. Do you know anything about special licenses and all that? You must help us, Sen—you must stand by us!"

"With all my heart!" was the quiet but prompt rejoinder. "I'll make inquiries to-morrow, and play the part of best man to the best of my poor ability." A pause "You will keep your marriage quiet for a time, I suppose?"

"Y—es," said Vane; "though I don't know of any reason why I shouldn't announce it in the usual way. Do you?"

"You ask me—— Confound it, I wish you wouldn't keep asking me awkward questions!"

"Oh, go on!" said Vane, smilingly. "Out with it! What is it?"

"Well—when I came in I found Miss Trevanion engaged in study. I happened to take up the books, and saw that they were—oh, elementary, quite elementary, treatises on the art of writing and spelling. I concluded that her—ahem!—education is not quite complete?"

Vane colored, but the smile did not leave his face.

"You are right," he said. "Nora did not know how to read or write when she came up to London."

Senley Tyers examined his cigarette closely.

"Y—es? Ah! Very interesting. But, my dear Vane, don't you think that her ignorance—charming as it is in your eyes and in mine—will seem rather singular to your high-born relations and remarkably swell friends—your relation, the Earl of Westleigh, for instance——"

"Whom I never see!" said Vane quietly.

"——Or Lady Florence and your other lady friends. Don't you think they will regard your wife—who has only just learned to read and write—with a certain amount of coldness and—pardon me—suspicion?"

Vane's face clouded, and he drew himself up with a hauteur very rare with him.

"What has Lady Florence to do with me or mine?" he said coldly.

"Everything, if you introduce Mrs. Vane Tempest into society," retorted Senley Tyers. "You may say that you needn't do so, that you can live like two hermits, a love-in-a-cottage kind of existence. I know that that sort of thing seems the sweetest of all ways of living to the true lover. But, my dear Vane, you are too much a man of the world not to know that you would be precious soon sick of your cottage, and that if you weren't, your wife would think you were, and that would be as bad. She would think you were ashamed of her——"

"Ashamed of Nora?"

The denial came swiftly, sternly.

Senley Tyers shrugged his shoulders.

"The world, your friends and relations, would say that you were," he said quite calmly. "But don't let us argue about it. Come and sit down, for heaven's sake."

"Yes, you are right," said Vane, ignoring the invitation to repose. "Yes, we will go away until—until——"

"——She has learned to read and write decently, at any rate," said Senley Tyers.

Vane looked at him sharply; but the sallow face was serene and without the sneer which should have accompanied the words.

"You appear to have a great regard for the world's opinion, Sen," he said with some surprise.

"I!" said Senley Tyers. "I beg your pardon. For myself and all that concerns me, excepting my pictures, I don't care a brass farthing for the world's opinion. But you are quite a different person to the humble painter and glazier, Senley Tyers. You are an aristocrat—one of the elect—a curled darling of society. Why, does it never occur to you that a chapter of accidents might make you the Earl of Westleigh, and that, therefore, your wife would be a real live countess?"

Vane smiled, but made no reply.

"But, my dear Vane, I must confess that it is not only you and your happiness I am considering. You seem to think that no one can appreciate Miss Nora but yourself. Permit me to inform you that I have ventured to entertain a great regard for Miss Trevanion, and that I would do a great deal, and go a long way, to ensure her happiness. It is of her, as much as yourself, of whom I am thinking, when I say keep quiet for awhile."

Iago himself could not have assumed the accents, the expression of truth more perfectly. Vane was touched. He came and dropped his strong hand on Senley Tyers' shoulder again, and kept it there for a moment in silence; and his voice was low and husky when at last he said—

"Sen, you are a true friend! I thank you for her! God bless you, Sen, old fellow!"

Senley Tyers put up his hand and touched his friend's, and pointed to the chair.

"And now sit down and drink your whisky, and for heaven's sake give me some, for all this sentiment has made me as dry as a lime-kiln!"

Vane apologized laughingly and brewed him a genuine Scotch toddy, and the two men sat and smoked a great deal and talked a little—always of Nora—until late into the night. Every now and then Senley Tyers replied rather absently, and paused as if he were listening, but Vane did not notice it. His heart, his brain, his whole being were full of his sweet girl-love.

They went upstairs at last, and Vane hung behind that he might listen at her door. All was silent as the grave within the little room.

"God bless my darling," he murmured, with more devotion than he had ever yet felt. It has been said that the love of a good woman will make an angel of a good man, and go far to reform a bad one. Vane was neither very good nor very bad, but he felt strangely grave and reverent as he lay awake hour after hour, dwelling on the pure innocent girl who had promised to be his wife.

He did not fall asleep until early morn, and he slept late. It was Senley Tyers who knocked at his door.

"Are you never going to get up?" he called out.

"Oh, it is you, Sen?" responded Vane sleepily. Come in."

Senley Tyers put his head round the door.

"Sorry to disturb you, my dear fellow," he said. "But I just looked in to tell you that I am on the point of starvation. Is it a Scottish custom to keep a guest without any breakfast? If so, it's more honored in the breach than the observance."

"Why, what's the time? Ten o'clock? No! Here, clear out and I'll be down in no time," cried Vane, leaping out of bed and shouting for his bath-water.

He was down very quickly. Senley Tyers was lounging outside the front door regarding the scenery with a dreamy, artistic gaze. Vane glanced into the sitting-room—the breakfast was laid, the kettle singing away cheerfully; but no one was there.

"Not down yet?" he asked in a low voice.

"I beg your pardon, I am very much down. Oh, you mean Miss Trevanion. No, I have not seen her, but she may be wandering about the hills. What a lovely view! I must take to landscapes——"

"I hope she isn't ill," said Vane, anxiously. "I will just run up——" Mrs. Burns crossed the passage with the chops and so. "Have you seen——" he paused, then with a faint color went on. "Mrs. Tempest this morning, Mrs. Burns?"

The woman dropped him a curtsey.

"Not yet, sir," she said with a smile, and with a remnant of her last night's excitement and surprise still on her face and in her manner. "I thought I'd better not disturb her."

"Quite right," he said. He fidgeted in and out of the room while the things were being put on the table, then, as if his patience were exhausted, he said, "One moment, Sen; I'll just run up and see——" and he went up the stairs two steps at a time. He knocked at the door twice, thrice, and called to her, but got no answer, and came slowly down again. "She must have gone out," he said, trying not to look disappointed.

Senley Tyers warmed his hands at the fire.

"Yes, she will be back directly, I expect." Then he looked over his shoulder with a sudden gravity in her eyes. "You don't think—you don't suspect——"

"Suspect? Suspect what?" demanded Vane with surprise.

"Nothing, nothing," said Tyers. "What a sunny room this is. One would think it were early autumn," but Vane apparently did not hear his remarks anent the brightness of the morning. He went to the door and looked out at the wild prospect.

Ten minutes elapsed. Senley Tyers glanced at his watch, and took up a piece of toast and sauntered with it in his hand to the door as a gentle hint that he had now reached starvation point.

"Oh, I beg your pardon, Sen," said Vane. "We may as well begin breakfast. Nora will be sure to be back before we've poured out the coffee."

"You are sure you called her loudly enough?" suggested Senley Tyers.

"Eh? Oh, yes, I—I think so. Here, I'll go up and see again," and he dumped down the coffee pot and sprang up the stairs.

His summons at the door met with no response, and the thin end of the wedge of dread and apprehension entered his mind and his heart. He knocked again, then gently tried the handle of the door. The door was locked. At this moment Mrs. Burns' girl passed.

"Has Miss—Mrs. Tempest gone out?" he asked in as careless a tone as he could assume.

"No, sir," replied the girl in her broad Scotch. "She has not left her room."

"Oh, but the door's locked," said Vane.

"She has na left her room, or I must ha' seen her," persisted the girl, eyeing him with shy curiosity and interest."

Vane's heart beat quickly.

"Do—do you think she's ill?" he asked almost stupidly.

"I dinna ken," said the girl. "She was greetin' and moanin' last night," she added.

Vane knew that "greeting" meant crying. The fear grew in his heart. Without a moment's hesitation he put his knee to the door and open it flew. He hesitated a moment before looking in, as if the room, her room, was sacred to him. Then he looked. The room was empty, but it was not its emptiness that sent a sharp stab of fear through him; it was the fact that the bed was as it had been made in the morning, that it had not been slept in. Her clothes—'Ernest Mortimer's'—lay on the ground where she had cast them. For all its neatness the room smote him with a sense of its desolateness.

His face went white as he looked round.

"She's gone away!" exclaimed the girl, all agog.

Vane turned upon her. If she had been a man he could have struck her.

"What do you mean?" he demanded sternly.

The girl stared at him with open eyes and mouth, then fled down the passage.

"Mither," Vane heard her cry, "the lassie's flit."

Senley Tyers must have heard her also, for he came slowly up the stairs. Vane closed the door and stood before it as if guarding it, and confronted him with white face and troubled eyes.

Vane could not find his voice for a moment, then he said—

"She—Nora—is not there! She has gone!"

"Gone!" echoed Senley Tyers, but even in that moment Vane noticed that though his voice was grave there was no surprise in it.

"Yes! She has not slept there—the bed ——" He could not go on. The sweat stood in big drops on his forehead, his lips trembled.

"Are you sure——?" began Senley Tyers.

Vane strode past him and down the stairs as if he had not heard him, and snatched his hat from the peg in the little hall.

Senley Tyers followed and caught him by the arm.

"Where are you going?" he asked quietly, still gravely.

"Going?" echoed Vane. "To find her!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

CURIOUS MARRIAGE STATISTICS.—A German statistician has recently published the results of his investigation of the relative ages of husbands and wives in the various capitals of Europe. He ascertained that marriages are the most frequent where the husband is two or three years older than the wife. Women under 20 years of age usually take unto themselves husbands six or seven years older than themselves. The cases in which the man was a year younger than the woman were almost as numerous as those in which he was six or seven years older. The first condition was true of 6-7 per cent. of all married couples and the latter condition of 6-4 per cent. The cases where the husband was six or seven years younger than the wife were also just as numerous as those where he was 13 or 14 years older. Only two cases were discovered where the husband was 35 years the senior, one case where he was 47 years older, and one case where he was older by 46 years. One case was discovered where the wife was 34 years older than the husband. Twelve and three-tenths per cent. of all men who marry women under 20 years of age are between 26 and 27 years old.

HUSBAND—"Didn't I tell you that was a secret and you were not to tell it to any one?" Wife—"You told me it was a secret, but you did not say I was not to tell it to any one."

LIFE'S JUNE.

BY SHIRLEY WYNNE.

The roses on the rose-trees were aglow—
I saw them burning scarlet in the sun—
And some were gold, and some like driven snow,
Fresh, newly blown each one.
I said, "I will not pluck them yet a while,
I shall have plenty in the time to come;
So many flowers in the pleasaunce smile,
So many deck my home?"

The merles were singing in the nested trees,
The world seemed brimming o'er with radiant light,
A thousand odors floated on the breeze
In clouds of incense bright.
I said, "I will not leave mine ease to-day,
Though Spring and Summer like twin-souls have met;
For many a month the sun will shine alway—
I need not seek it yet!"

Love sang outside my lattice, his white feet
The lilies crushing—Hesperus was low
In the gold West; his voice was passionate-sweet—
E'en angels sing not so!
I said, half sighing, "Ne'er have I heard sung
A strain like this! My heart thrills to the song.
But yet I will not answer; I am young,
And Love will linger long!"

O fool! One pallid wreath of withered bloom
I found when I sought roses; not one lay
Of bird or gleam of sun made glad the gloom
When from my couch I crept to view the day;
When I would have answered Love's sweet tune,
His broken lyre I found, and that alone.
Alas, alas, Life holdeth but one June—
And now my June is gone!

The Serpent's Chest.

BY A. P. A.

CHAPTER VI.

THREE days passed, and though deck hands, cooks, stewards, stokers, coal-trimmers, and, with two exceptions, all the other members of the "Elsinore's" household were in a chronic state of searching, not a trace of Burgoyne could be discovered.

The two exceptions were the Captain and the squint-eyed man—enemies and polar opposites in everything else, but at one in disapproving of the chief officer's wager. The former said it would give the ship a bad name, and Travison ought to have known better than to mix himself up with such nonsense.

The latter observed that betting was a wicked occupation, and groaned and projected his eyes to the bridge of his nose whenever the chief officer was within hailing distance. The squint-eyed man's scruples caused more amusement than alarm; even Staynes chuckled over them; but the Captain's hostility was a graver matter.

To be discountenanced by a man who is as autocratic in his kingdom as the Great White Tzar is in his, bodes ill for the object of the displeasure. And if I add that when our most sapient Captain was riled with his officers, he exhibited towards them the manners of a bargee, combined with the tact of an experienced hangman, you will understand that Travison's position had become vastly uncomfortable.

The Captain hoped—with purple-faced sarcasm—that Mister Travison would remember that he was paid to assist in the navigation of the ship, and not to spend all his time in examining the stowage of the holds, or gossiping with the stokers whilst they were on duty.

The Captain—with a grin which any professional fiend might have envied—trusted that Mister Travison would occasionally permit some of the deck hands to do their duty during his watch to-night.

The fact that there was an inadequate watch kept last night didn't matter, as things turned out, for the weather was clear; but now the sky was heavily clouded over, and it would be a pity to bring the "Elsinore" into collision just through her chief officer's whim.

The Captain—with a nut-cracker bow of exquisite politeness—would be very much obliged if on the next cruise Mister Travison would ship a company of detectives, at ordinary fares, to do his dirty work, as he—the Captain—did not like having his own crew tampered with.

And so the Captain's song went on for several pages, with many more still to turn over. And when Staynes tried good-naturedly to smooth matters, the Captain savagely retorted that when he wanted advice he would go to a sea-lawyer, and not to a lubberly land-shark.

The which hint was sufficiently pointed to make the would-be mediator drop the controversy. For be it known unto all men that as a sea-lawyer is a very undesirable sort of body indeed, the comparison was a peculiarly unflattering one.

So that when I suggested experimenting with the serpent's cage on deck; and the chief officer agreed in the advisability thereof, he added that we must take care not to let our doings come to the eyes of the old man.

The cage in question was an iron-bound, hardwood chest, four feet by seven, by six, lashed securely down to ring-bolts on the deck, just abaft the foremast. It had caught my eye long before; they were hoisting it on board when I came to Travison on the Friday night.

It was very solidly put together, and had evidently received a great deal of knocking about before it reached the "Elsinore." But though bruised, it was nowhere fractured. There were nail marks all round the middle, showing where a floor divided it half-way up; but no other evidences of the internal arrangements.

Each compartment was ventilated by a small square of perforated zinc, but one could not see through into the interior. At one end there were a brace of doors, one above the other; but they were securely fastened with number combination locks, which no instrument more delicate than a hammer could pick.

A printed direction on the outside told that the chest was consigned to the Secretary of the Royal Zoological Society, at their Garden in Regent's Park, London; and to the curious, who gave him a really good cigar, the purser would tell more.

"I've seen some rummy things on bills of lading," he would say, "but this caps all. It's snakes there is in that box, just nasty, slimy snakes, and nothing more. There's two of them, and though I ain't seen 'em myself, the chap that brought the box on board has, and he gave me a full description. They are called—h'm, let me see"—here he would refer to a bulgy note-book—"ah, anaconda"—here he would light the cigar, take a steady puff or two, and roll out the next word as if he loved it—"Galburtzicnsis Anacondas Galburtziensises! ther's a name for you! They were discovered by a German chap who was fossilising, and bug-hunting, and that sort of thing, 'way down in the Mexico valley, and a rare thing he had as how to get hold of them, so I'm told. But he was 'cute, this German. He'd learned that these snakes always prefer man-meat to any other when they can get it. So what does he do but hire a couple of Mexicans for a parakeet shoot, and march 'em off to the swamp where the anacondas resided. Out slimed the snakes, and the two Mexicans were soon crowded into their stomachs; and then the German clapt 'em into that cage, up on deck yonder, and put 'em on the cars for New York. Value, did somebody say? Wish I owned 'em, that's all. Why, they are insured for fifteen hundred—— Eh? No, pounds."

Then some one would ask when the anacondas were fed, and the purser would gaze round him, with a smile, for a full minute.

"Eat is it? They won't want feeding for another month yet. D'ye think you'd want to eat if you'd crammed down a nasty, greasy, smelly Mexican at a meal? Pooh!" And then for fear lest he had wounded his questionist's feelings, he would rush towards the bar and enquire: "what's it called?"

Travison and I puzzled over this snake story a good deal. We allowed for a large amount of exaggeration; but even omitting the unfortunate Mexicans, we could not quite swallow the anacondas.

The chief officer wanted to know if there were such things as anacondas in that part of the world. I could assure him that there were in Brazil, and in many other parts of South America, but could not vouch for Mexico being similarly blessed. The doctor, too, to whom we applied for enlightenment, could give us little aid.

As time wore on, and no Burgoyne showed up—although Travison's "second-sight" still saw him near—the contents of that coffer interested us more and more. It was not large enough for a big man like Burgoyne to stand up in, or to move about in, supposing it stored with provisions; even granting that the strongly-conjectured mid-partition did not exist. But—it was, as we thought, the only possible hiding-place which remained unexplored.

We were five days out when Travison proposed his plan. He and I were sitting smoking in his cabin after breakfast.

"Henderson," he said, bringing his hand with a thump on to my knee, "I'm going to find out if Burgoyne's in that chest this very night."

"How?"

"Why, like this. I'm going to make believe to heave it overboard. If he's inside, and holds his tongue, well, he's got more pluck than I credit any man on this earth for having."

Then he explained with minute detail how it was to be done, telling me at the same time that I should have to play the part of the Captain.

"I don't want to be rude," he said, "but you've just got the old man's voice; and he must be the one to give the orders. Burgoyne would smell a rat at once if he heard me speak."

I acquiesced; and after we had thrashed out a few other points, Marline was brought to the cabin and let into the conspiracy.

* * * * * *

The wind was fresh and easterly in the morning. It strengthened as the day wore on; and by nightfall it was blowing half a gale, still from the same quarter, and had kicked up a heavy sea.

The "Elsinore" was by no means a wet boat, as a general thing, but she was taking tons of water over her bows just then, and the foredeck was swimming. Nothing could have been better for our purpose. Travison was on the bridge, and the Captain was in his berth with the happy assurance that he had got a thorough seaman in command of the ship.

A man was moving about in a mysterious manner near the foremast. He was filling and refilling a bucket with water, and dashing its contents at intervals against the zinc-covered ports of the serpent's chest. The man was Marline.

Presently he tramped aft, and returning along the swaying decks, brought with him the Captain—the bogus captain; myself.

There was a consultation against one of the zinc windows, the sailor pointing out that three of the ring-bolts to which the lashings were secured had been drawn already; that there was nothing else to make the chest fast to; and that if it fetched way with this mass of sea running, two or three men would perhaps be killed before it crashed through the bulwarks and made its escape.

The Captain made use of a considerable amount of forcible language, at the impudence of some people in burdening him with a deck-load; at the state of the weather; at the lubbers who had pretended to lash the chest fast; and then he bade Marline lay out along the fore-yard and rig a whip.

Marline obeyed the order; and returning shortly with one end of the whip, made that and a couple of guy-ropes fast to the chest. Two other men came to assist, and after the lashings had been cut adrift, a steam-winch was set going, and the chest swung out to the bulwarks.

It poised on the narrow ledge, lurching madly to and fro, and I waited a moment or two to let Burgoyne gather the full force of the situation.

There was no sign of life, and so the order was given to cut away—an order which, needless to remark, was not executed.

No sound came from the chest; and looking rather foolish over the sell, we lowered it back to its place on deck.

When everything was ship-shape again the real Captain joined us. He was just half a minute too late to see the last of the performance; but, guessing something of what had taken place, his language was more lurid than polite. We walked back aft together, and when under the bridge, he stopped and roared at his chief officer, who was parading above:

"After that infernal stowaway again, are ye, Mr. Travison? Smite me, but I'll report you for neglect of duty when we put in Liverpool. And if I catch you at this game again, I'll take you there in irons. I will, so help me handcuffs! And as for you, Mr. Henderson, if I hear of you meddling with my crew again, I'll—ugh! bless me—I'll put you in irons, too. And now, confound you, go below, or I shall be losing my temper next!"

CHAPTER VII.

ABOUT eight o'clock the next morning Williams burst into my cabin with more than his usual hurry and bustle. I was lying broad awake, thinking of what to say should the Captain be too inquisitive over last night's business. The steward's first words were peculiar ones. He blurted out:

"Mr. 'Enderson, sir, hi'm blowed." And then commenced scrubbing his knobbly head with a lean, red hand.

I nodded a nod which hazarded no opinion as to the correctness of the statement, and waited for an explanation. It came at last.

"You know that 'ere squint-h'eyed man, sir? O' course. Who doesn't? Well, 'e ain't squint-eyed at all, sir. There!"

"I know that," said I, with a smile at the fellow's eagerness.

The steward stared.

"Knowed it, did ye, sir? Then p'raps you won't be surprised to 'ear that 'e h'ain't got a red beard neither."

It was my turn to be startled now.

"H'all the 'air on 'is face takes on an' h'off like a set o' false teeth. Now that's noos, sir, h'ain't it? Hi went into 'is cabin suddint-like jes' now, an' cotched 'im razor in 'and, scrapin' away at a stubbly black chin for all the world like a Christian. Jes' think o' that, now. An' when 'e sees me, 'e lets a yell out of him like a Injun, an' I gets an' comes straight 'ere, sir."

"What is he up to, do you suppose?"

"Boltin' from the beaks, sir, you can lay. Cashier probably, and got 'is swag with 'im. There's a wood-box stowed away in the upper berth in his cabin big enough to bury a man in. There'll be dollars in that, hi allow, Mr. 'Enderson."

"What shape is the box?"

"Like a coffin, savin' that the sides is straight, an' there's rope beckets on it, instead o' plated handles. But it ain't a sea-chest. It's too long an' narrow for that. Why, it 'ud 'old you with yer 'at on, sir."

"Williams," said I, dropping my legs over the side of the berth, and sitting up, "you are going to pocket that hundred sovereigns if I'm not very much mistaken."

"Lawd, Mr. 'Enderson, you don't think that 'ere squint-h'eyed man's got Mr. Burgoyne stowed away, do yer?" gasped Williams, the knobs on his head fairly blushing with delight.

"Now clear out," said I, "and let me get up. I must go and see Mr. Travison. Meanwhile, contrive unostentatiously to keep a note on the squint-eyed man's movements."

I dressed rapidly, and went to the chief officer's cabin. He had been asleep, but woke at my entrance. I told him all that Williams had said, and asked his opinion on it.

"Why," said he, "I think we have run Burgoyne to the earth at last. This is how he managed. He slipped on board amongst Staynes' flock under the very noses of us. You saw him. He was the tall, dark man, with the stoop and the long ulster. He dived below, and went straight to that squint-eyed fellow's cabin. Once there, the course is simple. When Williams is likely to pay a visit, friend Burgoyne retires to the long box—I was fool enough to put the idea of a coffin in his head, if you remember? When the coast is clear, he can emerge, and make himself tolerably comfortable. Provisions are easily supplied; other necessaries are a mere matter of detail. Henderson, old man, I'm eternally obliged to you and Williams. Without this hint, I verily believe Burgoyne would have slipped through without detection."

"But we haven't got hold of him yet. Don't make too sure of success, for fear of a disappointment."

"No, but now that we are certain as to his whereabouts, we shall not be long in laying hands on him. I shall have no delicate scruples in dealing with that squint-eyed man. He is an accomplice—he's conniving at a fraud against the Company, if you like to put it that way—and so I shall have no hesitation in searching his cabin, whether he likes it or not. We are in no desperate hurry for a day, so we will just wait till he is decently out of the road before making the overhaul, for I don't want to have a disturbance if it can be avoided. I'll give him till to-morrow afternoon, and if he doesn't see fit to offer us an opportunity before then, he'd better keep his weather-eye well skinned for squalls."

But the squint-eyed man did not leave the coast clear for an overhaul of his effects. On the contrary, he stayed in the saloon, or his own cabin, during the whole of the prescribed time. And so recourse was had to scientific strategy.

Travison interviewed the doctor. The doctor grinned, and produced from his waistcoat pocket a case which contained a small glass-and-silver syringe. He screwed the head of the syringe off, and selected a small glass tube from the half-dozen which the cavity contained.

This glass tube held ten small white tabloids, about the size of a large pin's head. The doctor shook one out, grinned again, and handed it to Travison.

Travison passed it on to Williams.

In the course of the next half-hour that

faithful steward—or unfaithful, according to which point of view you look at him from—had slipped the little tabloid into the cup of tea with which the squint-eyed man was wont to mark eight bells in the afternoon.

We saw the dose inserted with our own eyes; we saw the victim walk about, with head well forward, and sip the liquid in his accustomed manner, we saw him return to his cabin, finish the last drop, and emerge; we watched his eyes get drowsier, and more drowsy; we chuckled as he went into the deck-house at the head of the after-companion, and stretched himself at length on a sofa; and when, after a yawn or two, he settled down to a steady snore, we fairly rubbed our hands with delight. Not venturing to pass him, we gained the lower deck by the other companion, and made straight for his cabin.

The door was locked, but the invaluable Williams produced a duplicate key. We entered. The long box lay in the upper berth, with its lid off—empty. In the lower berth slept a tall, broad-shouldered, black-haired man.

"Burgoyne at last," whispered Travison, with a sigh of relief.

The sleeper lay with his face towards the inside of the bunk. The chief officer bent over to wake him, and started back with an angry oath.

"Up on deck again," he shouted, "and grab that chap on the sofa! He's the man we want!"

And away we scurried; but only to find the place deserted.

"After him again!" cried my friend. 'He must be close at hand."

And in every nook and corner, in every available hiding-place did we search, desisting only when exhaustion claimed us for its own.

Then we foregathered once more in Travison's cabin.

"Good Heavens!" he exclaimed; "fancy being sold like this. Burgoyne has got another fellow who is almost exactly like him, and whilst one takes his turn at wearing the red beard and assuming the squint, the other lies safely locked in number twenty-two. What dolts we have been! Any one but a thorough-paced idiot would have seen through this 'double' squint-eyed man's game. Why, he laid himself out to be disliked, and shunned, and avoided in the most barefaced manner imaginable; and we, in giving him a wide berth, have been doing the very thing he wanted. I wonder which half of the 'double' took the opiate, or if it was never swallowed at all? Come to think of it, the cunning beggar did take a three-parts-full teacup into his own cabin, and return with it empty. I thought, then, the contents were safely down his gullet. I am inclined to think now that the balance was bestowed on the wash-basin. Oh, Henderson, it is hard to have a glimpse of the man, and then miss him again like this!"

"Come, now, don't despond. We have stopped one earth at any rate, and Burgoyne will be hard put to it to find another burrow anything like so good. We shall lay hands on him soon, you may be sure."

"Not we," said Travison, despondently. "A man who is sharp enough to think of such a trick as this will not be floored for a retreat good enough to hold him for the day and a half we have left."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE breeze, which had been light throughout the day, died away as the sun sank in majestic splendor beneath the purple waters of the west. It was a calm, and, save for a long, low, oily swell, the troublous waters of the Atlantic were at rest. Not a vessel was in sight from the "Elsinore's" deck.

We were on an ocean highway; but tracks are broad where no Macadam is known. The sky was not cloudy nor the air misty; but a velvet pall of darkness blotted out the lamps of the heavens, and the only luminants that shone on the watery desert around us were those which the "Elsinore" gave birth to. Astern, the wake was dimly phosphorescent; abeam, the yellow radiance from the ports glanced out warm and mellow; ahead, the sea was not in sight.

It was exactly the night a sailor likes. There was no possible chance of missing the lights of another ship. A soldier could not go wrong in such weather.

Travison and I had just come up from below; he to relieve, in a few minutes' time, the Captain on the bridge, and I to chat with him over the best means of laying hands on Burgoyne, who still remained intangible. In reply to some question as to speed, we had gone aft to examine the taffrail log, and were abreast of the stern-most skylight, when a couple of confused hails rang out from the bows.

They were not the ordinary bawls of shipboard. They were shrieks rather: the despairing yells of scared strong men who were unnerved by deadly peril.

"Hard-a-port! Full-astern, for gracious sake!"

Round ran the engine-room bell from "full speed ahead" to "full speed astern." The steam steering-gear rattled at frantic pace. But before the momentum of the huge steamer could be lessened, or her course appreciably altered, there was a sickening thud, and then a grinding, a rendering, and a tearing, that told its own tale.

The first jolt threw me down with rude force. Travison clutched a stanchion, and kept his legs, and then set off running forward as hard as ever he could tear. I followed as soon as my breath came back, which was not for a minute or so; but seeing dense crowds surging up from the hatchways, I stayed under the bridge to await developements.

Presently the chief officer came back, and the skipper greeted him anxiously with:

"Well, Travison, what is it?"

"We've bumped into a water-logged derelict, sir, wood-laden, and flush with the water. She's cut in two, and the sea is strewn with planks. We have got half our bottom torn out. Collision bulk-head's gone by the water-line, and the Atlantic is tearing in like a mill-race." Then his voice dropped, and my straining ear just caught the words—"Not the smallest chance; ripped completely out. Half an hour perhaps, but I couldn't be sure of that."

The Captain whispered, "Go and get some revolvers," and when Travison sped off on his errand, the commanding officer lifted up his voice:

"To your quarters now, every man-Jack of you. Stewards, provision the boats. Boat crews, stand by your tackles, get the plugs in, swing the davits, and then hold on till the word is given to lower away. Now be smart, and don't let there be any confusion, or lives will be lost. Those not on duty keep away from the boats. We've a small passenger list. There will be heaps of room for all hands."

At first it seemed as if some of the stokers, whom the depression of the bows terrified nearly out of their wits, were going to make a rush for the boats; but the Captain's orders, and the gleam of two or three pistols which Travison had distributed amongst the officers, held them in check, and all worked smoothly.

The engineers were letting off steam as fast as it would escape; the third officer was sending up rockets; the fourth officer firing the brass signal-gun as quickly as he could load it. Blue lights illuminated the steamer at a half-a-dozen points. A seaman was up on the fore-topgallant yard showing a flare.

The decks were alive with hurrying men; but there was order in the confusion and method in the bustle. Stewards brought up from below bags of biscuit, hams, cans of beef, and stowed them away in the boats' lockers; each coxswain saw that his water-breakers were full; the boat's officer inspected all, and tested his compass.

As each boat was prepared, she was filled with a human freight, lowered into the water, and shoved off. The "Elsinore's" bows were sinking fast, and every minute her stern rose higher and higher in the air. But though there was some difficulty in manœuvring the quarter-boats, no accidents happened; and in twenty-five minutes from the collision the shattered steamer was left without a soul on board of her. Four minutes later her screw swung round towards the zenith, part of her deck blew up, and she sank quietly down towards the ooze abysses of the sea floor.

* * * * * *

By the Captain's orders the eight boats remained within hail of one another. Not a breath of wind tarnished the smooth surface of the water, and, with Crookhaven bearing about forty-five miles east and by north, there was no need to exhaust the men with unnecessary rowing.

The Captain, with four of the cabin passengers, was in the starboard lifeboat. The chief officer had got me with him in the second cutter. The other boats were all clustered within a circle of a quarter of a mile radius.

The means of the "Elsinore's" destruction was an uncommon one; but it was simple, and we had soon viewed it in every aspect. Then, after a moment's lull in the conversation, I reminded Travison that his wager with Burgoyne would now be drawn.

"Yes," he said, "and I am not sorry for it. We might have caught him before we cleared Roches Point, outwards, but I have my doubts on the subject. By-the-way, which boat is he in?"

"Good Heavens! Haven't you seen him? I didn't."

"By Jove, Henderson, I hope the poor chap has not been hiding down amongst the cargo and got jammed to death by the shock of collision. I should never——"

"Boat ahoy!" sang out a voice.

"Hullo!"

"Is that Travison?"

"Yes."

"I'll bet you twenty to one in one thousand dollar notes that I get ashore safely out of this. The other bet's off now, worse luck; and I want to turn an honest cent or two somehow."

There was a muffled cackle of laughter from some of the men within earshot, and the Captain, whose temper was permanently soured by past events, cursed the successful stowaway vigorously.

But the chief officer refused to bet on the "heads I win, tails you lose" principle. Besides, he said he had had enough of gambling to last him for some time.

* * * * * *

Morning broke, and with it came a breeze from the W. S. W.; but scarcely had we stepped our masts, and got the boats under canvas, than a homeward-bound steamer hove in sight and bore down upon us.

We breakfasted in her saloon.

Burgoyne, who still sported a heavy black moustache, sat beside a tall, dark, clean-shaven man, whom he introduced as "Mr. Crighton-Philipps, an actor, whom every one knows."

Mr. Crighton-Philipps showed us how he could squint at will, and told us of his amusing experience when creating the character of the "Squint-Eyed Man;" and of how he had "to make up the gag as he went along, as the book was all wrong." And after favoring us with a description of the way we all fell into the roles assigned to us, he concluded thus:

"The physicked cup of tea nearly did for me. I swallowed it all, but twigged what was the matter just in time. I couldn't keep my eyes open nohow, and so, after humbugging you into believing me asleep in the deck-house, I slipped below again, and was doing a genuine snore when you arrived at number twenty-two."

"I thought it best," said Burgoyne, "to give you something to think about—some decoy to occupy your best attention. And so, as Crighton-Philipps was coming across in the 'Elsinore,' we agreed that he should make everything connected with himself as mysterious as possible, and so create the idea of a 'double.'"

"Then weren't you in his cabin at all?" enquired Travison, with great surprise.

"No, I was labelled 'snakes,' and stayed on deck."

"Well, I am blessed."

"Confound it all! I thought you knew, or it should never have come out, and I could have worked the same racket again. Yes, I was there fast enough, and fairly snug, too, for the chest contained everything one was likely to want. Man alive, you and Henderson watched me hoisted on board, and never suspected anything. I saw you stare at my shell, and then go on gossiping again. That collision was real hard luck; as I should have got through for a certainty, although yesterday afternoon one of your sailors did nearly make me howl out by ramming a gimlet into the small of my back.

"I only feared for my money once; and that was when you threatened to heave me overboard. It was rather an anxious moment. But I thought you were bluffing, and guessed I'd see your raise. Oh yes, I was a bit scared, you bet; but—— Here, let's change the subject. Who's on for poker?"

[THE END.]

"This is so sudden," she said, blushing at the tender question. "I know it," he responded gallantly; "I never should have done it if I had taken time to think about it."

After War, Pestilence and Intemperance, Colds lead to the greatest destruction of human life, mainly in consequence of their being systematically neglected—"left to go as they come"—until a simple, curable affection is converted into a serious and generally fatal disease. It is better to take care of a Cough or Cold from its incipiency, by using promptly Dr. Jayne's Expectorant, a remedy thoroughly adapted to remove these complaints, and equally effective in the primary stages of Consumption, Asthma and Bronchitis.

Scientific and Useful.

ALUMINUM.—It has heretofore been almost impossible to make large castings of aluminum, but the difficulty has now been so far overcome that pure aluminum bath-tubs are now made in a single piece.

GAMBLING.—A man in Birmingham, Ala., has been arrested for manipulating an ingenious gambling device in which a current of electricity under the operator's control could be used to determine the way in which the dice should fall.

IRON AND STEEL.—The simplest way to tell iron from steel is to pour on the metal a drop of nitric acid, and allow it to act for one minute. On rinsing with water a grayish-white stain will be seen if the metal is iron; a black one if it is steel.

FUEL.—A new kind of fuel made from solidified petroleum and other materials is now being extensively manufactured in France. It is stated that its heat producing properties are very great, and that experiments to use it in engine furnaces have been of a most satisfactory nature.

TROLLEY.—The Union Railroad Company, of Providence, is to maintain wagons equipped to do service on the wires at all fires where the trolley is near enough to be dangerous. These wagons are to be provided with every appliance for rapid work in cutting or unstringing wires, and will be manned by a regular force of men.

THE STORAGE BATTERY.—It is maintained very stoutly by expert electricians that the storage battery is, after all, a success for commercial work; that the new processes for manufacturing them have cheapened their cost, and that in train lighting they are especially efficient and economical. It is estimated that $85 per horse power is the annual cost of the accumulator.

CHEMISTRY.—A scientist thinks that agricultural chemistry should teach how to make Florida oranges better. To this end he is now engaged in a chemical analysis of the different varieties grown upon different soils, etc., fed by different fertilizers, with the idea that he can do for oranges what the Frenchmen have done for pears and what the grape growers have done for grapes.

Farm and Garden.

THE CROPS.—A writer suggests two ways of getting a profit out of the crops. One is to increase the production per acre and so decrease the cost, and the other, to vary our crops and relieve the overproduction of the staple and give prices a chance to stiffen up.

BREEDING.—The young animals are the future breeders. Every farmer knows that when the calf, colt or pig is stunted when very young the effects remain. Push the young ones, and keep them growing. The first year's gain is more important than any year in the future.

SUCCESS.—In order to be wholly successful a farmer should make his plans a long time in advance of the day when they must be put into operation. The best way is to mature a plan of operations that will require some years for fully carrying out. This brings better results than the changeable way that some have, of trying one way this year and another the next.

GOOD STOCK.—One of the principal advantages in having good stock is that with a little extra feed and care a much better gain can be secured and they can readily be made ready for market in a less time than scrubs; and at this season this will often be found quite an advantage. Whenever the hogs or cattle are fully ready, sell. There is no possible advantage in feeding a day after they are ready for market.

POULTRY.—The man who cannot make a dozen hens pay a fair profit on the investment will not succeed with a large number. The losses occurring with large flocks are due to diseases, which may carry off hundreds in a short time. The individuals of a small flock may be easily noticed, and when a whole year has been given to observation with such a flock the matter of keeping poultry for profit will be better understood. It is not so much how to succeed as how to avoid loss the poultryman should understand. The first step is with a small flock, and progress should be made gradually, in order to become proficient.

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LUCAS COUNTY }

FRANK J. CHENEY makes oath that he is the senior partner of the firm of F. J. CHENEY & Co., doing business in the City of Toledo, County and State aforesaid, and that said firm will pay the sum of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS for each and every case of Catarrh that cannot be cured by the use of HALL'S CATARRH CURE. FRANK J. CHENEY.

Sworn to before me and subscribed in my presence, this 6th day of December, A. D. 1886.

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On Bigotry.

When we find a man who, though holding firm beliefs of his own, is willing to give other fairly reasonable beliefs not only quarter, but equality, and to admit that they too have a chance of being right, we may venture to wear him in our "heart's core"—ay, in our "heart of hearts."

If we think of bigotry in its essence and follow the spirit away from religion, we shall look a long way before we find a man who is perfectly free from it. Bigotry is more than thinking we are right and those who differ from us are wrong; it dislikes and resents other beliefs—it is prejudice set hard and exuding sour feeling. Most of us have a warp of bigotry somewhere or other in our character—a knotty excrescence that spoils its beauty, and makes it either ugly or grotesque.

If it is not religion, then it is politics, or literature, or art, or theories of trade—somewhere we are pretty sure to find an excuse for breaking out into bigotry. It is all the fault of the ridiculous all-devouring egotism that is the besetting sin of our vain race. The little that we know, or think, or believe, or feel seems so important compared with the infinite knowledge that lies outside our experience. Let us once get thoroughly well satisfied with our present attainments, and bigotry soon creeps in. We begin to resent differences that cannot be improvements, and it is not a long step to hating them and fighting them. They call upon us to rearrange our well-fitted theories, to readjust our impressions, which is a nuisance, and so many a man who likes a quiet life without any bother finds it exceedingly convenient to seize early upon a complete outfit of opinions, and to hold them against all comers all the rest of his life, never giving an inch of ground, but sallying out at favorable moments to knock the enemy on the head.

Thus people entrench themselves behind religious formulas, and repel all intruders; or they jump to the conclusion that the world is not round, and resist all arguments to the contrary; or they persuade themselves that novel-reading is pernicious, or the theatre the way to destruction, and so take arms against a sea of troubles. They appropriate to themselves a little plot of beliefs, as the contented cottier encloses a small strip of ground, and it is more than all the rest of the world to them.

At the first glance, one would not expect religion to be the most fertile source of bigotry, for religious people are not primarily engaged in fighting each other, but in fighting a common enemy. In politics the several sides are in direct opposition. Now this party triumphs and holds the citadel, and then they are dispossessed and dolefully lay siege to it once more, while the enemy rejoices over them. There is a tangibility about political contests that is almost as satisfying to the love of fighting as actual blows would be, so one can excuse a certain degree of bigotry in politicians. Yet politics do not run to bigotry as often as religion does.

This very clash of arms, which might be expected to make politics the occasion of blindest bigotry, has really an opposite effect, just as chivalry grew out of fighting. No; it is in religion that bigotry is found in its worst forms; and the cause of it is that men brood apart on religious questions, and rarely meet those who would correct and modify their views. When a prophet has been making himself crazy alone in the wilderness, the next act is most likely to be a redemptive campaign with fire and sword as weapons.

Once get caught in one of the whirlpools of bigoted faith, and there is little chance of sailing the great oceans of human thought. Why should a man examine other religions impartially when the one he has satisfies him? Why should he range through the world's literature when a single book, read through the pin-hole of a creed, furnishes wisdom enough for the life that now is and for that which is to come? It looks amazing that anybody should be bigoted when one approaches the question from the point of view of the man of the world who realizes the diversity of human thought, past and present, on great questions; but it is the easiest thing in the world to grow into a bigot by starting from ignorance and suffering at a very early period from arrested culture.

Is there much bigotry in religion? Our impression is that there is an enormous amount of misunderstanding and veiled distrust, though it may not quite amount to bigotry. Think what a rejoicing, as a marvel, takes place when preachers of various Christian faiths are found on the same platform, forwarding religious work in common!

Of bigotry in politics there are far more traces in out-of-the-way places and among the rank and file than can be found among those who have to live together and often to work in unison notwithstanding differences of opinion. The first qualification for a man who would take part in public life without losing his peace of mind and serenity of temper is the belief that the men against whom he wars have "a general honest intent," that they mean well, although they are so deplorably mistaken. If he has reached that frame of mind, he can hardly be termed a bigot. But let us pass lightly from this part of our subject lest we rouse the sleeping monsters of prejudice!

Even in the literary world the bigot is alert. It is true, though passing strange. One would have thought that the inveterate reader would have been grateful for all the good the gods provide, and that, desperately as authors have been known to quarrel in their lifetime, they would rest in peace in our libraries. But it is not so. Every writer of note has his bigoted enemies, his bigoted panegyrists.

No doubt a considerable share of the furious criticism that is from time to time directed against now this and now that established favorite is the work of critics in search of a sensation. Though there is but one way of making a reputation as a literary appraiser—namely, by loving yet judicious study of writers whose fame shines steadily and whose works are widely known—there are two ways of making a momentary splash in criticism, though both have been made miry by use of late. One is by discovering a new writer, and the other is by disparaging an old writer. Many of us could name some work respecting which we are bigoted.

Indeed there is no length to which the hardy bigot will not go. Sometimes his queer conclusions are the effects of pique, sometimes the unripe fruit of ignorance, sometimes they are due to a mental warp, which but for them might have remained unnoticed.

Literary bigotry however has the advantage of political and religious bigotry, inasmuch as it breaks out only in spots, otherwise it would destroy its victim's claim to be thought literary; whereas the more bigoted the politician the greater his zeal, and in some cases the more bigoted the theologian the firmer his reputation for sanctity.

Happily the bigot has lost his power. Once he reigned; now he is discredited, except in the eyes of his clique. We see that truth is greater than our fathers thought, and we are afraid to affirm that the patent is assigned exclusively to us.

IT is not sincerity that leads men to be rude and blunt, thoughtless and unkind. Let no one lay this flattering unction to his soul. Very often it is a simple egotism that is so full of self and its own concerns that it hastens to force them upon other persons quite unnecessarily. Every thought, however crude, must be uttered; every opinion, however shallow, must be aired; every difference of taste or sentiment or idea must be emphasized, and all in the much-abused name of sincerity.

Is there not a little too much of gratuitous fault-finding? With people it becomes a very hateful habit, to which they are chronically addicted. Continual references to mistakes induce a wilful perseverance in them; familiarity with incessant complaint breeds contempt for it. The safest rule seems to be that only when all other and gentler resources have been tried and proved useless should we venture upon the distinct mention of specific faults.

ONE of the first lessons that a young man should learn is faithfulness to duty and trustworthiness in small matters. Having these, the foundation of prosperity is laid; and, if to such characteristics are added a determination to become absolute master of the business and the capacity to grasp the various requirements, the highway to wealth and standing is well laid out.

THE chief nobility of life is work. We live in a working world. The idle and lazy man does not count in the plan of campaign. Labor found man a brute and has made him an intelligent agent. It discovered him dwelling in caves, clad in the skins of the chase, devouring uncooked flesh, and has made him what he is to-day.

CARLYLE speaks of "the divine relation which in all times unites a great man to other men." It is only as we perceive this relation and recognize its immense significance that we can ever truly honor humanity or estimate the real value of its highest manifestations.

DILIGENCE will insure success; slackness and neglect mean inevitable failure. To know how is of course much; but to do the best you know, and keep diligently at it, is the best way to learn how, and the only sure road to success.

EVERYTHING that can cheer, amuse, and entertain should be contributed to the meeting of family or friends. Refreshment of heart and mind should be considered equally important with refreshment of body.

EACH man's life is a unity. There is an underlying principle which explains both his private and public life; and until we apprehend that we do not know the man.

NOT to do honor to old age is to demolish in the morning the house wherein we are to sleep at night.

CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENTS.

THERE.—Monaco is the smallest independent state in Europe. It has an area of about six square miles.

G. C. C.—Ben, or ben nut, is a fruit from which oil of ben is extracted. It is much valued by perfumers and watch-makers for its sweetness and fluidity.

YOUNG DYER.—No mordant is required for dyeing silk and wool with aniline colors. You have simply to clean the silk or wool well, then immerse it in a warm solution of aniline color dissolved in alcohol.

FORK.—In ancient times all nations used knives and other cutting instruments made of bronze. The Greeks and Romans were restricted to them until knives of iron and steel came into use and were found to be stronger and more lasting.

SKETCHER.—Artists' canvas is the material on which most oil paintings are made. Before using it is usually primed or covered with a preparation of chalk and size or of white lead, which, when dry, is ground until its surface is smooth. It is also generally stretched on wooden frames of the size of the picture.

E. D.—No man is justified in playing fast and loose with a woman's affections, or in engaging with another lady whilst pledged to a previous one. In all matters of affection the word should be the bond; and if you break the bond, you must pay the penalty of a dishonor which will cling to you like the poisoned shirt of Nessus did to Hercules.

DOUBT.—"The Madonna of the House of Alva" is a beautiful picture of the Virgin and Child, by Raphael Sanzio. She is seated with the child on her lap, and holds a book in her hand; the little St. John, kneeling before his divine companion, offers him a cross, which he receives with looks of love. This picture was formerly in London, but it is now in St. Petersburg. The one in Ravenna, Italy, is a copy.

POST.—The stoppage of growth in a single limb does not necessarily imply that growth has stopped everywhere. The Chinese bandage their daughter's feet and stop foot-growth, but the other parts of their bodies grow all the same. It is by no means uncommon to find children's feet growing faster proportionately than their bodies, and then ceasing to grow, though the stature continues to increase.

STUDENT.—Latin and Greek are called "learned languages," because they were the languages of the nations who civilized Western Europe, and attained an eminence in art and science which in some respects has not been surpassed by any more modern nation. They were "learned" languages, too, because they were successfully studied only by comparatively few systematic scholars, and lastly they were learned, because they opened up to those who learnt them the vast literatures of Greece and Rome.

MARK.—The exploits of Augustina, the famous heroine of Saragossa, are to be found in Southey's "History of the Peninsular War." She has been also painted by Wilkie, and is alluded to in Wordsworth's Dissertation on the Convention of Cintra. She was elevated to a very high rank for her bravery, and, decorated with medals and orders by command of the Spanish Junta, and was to be seen daily on the Prado. Her exploits are further alluded to in Byron's "Childe Harold, and also in "The Age of Bronze. Such characters are not myths, or the creation of an author's fancy.

REES AND WILKS.—Young ladies having hooked the unwary fish, should not torture him or play with him too much. If a young gentleman is ready to escort a sweetheart home, she should not expect him "to find out where she goes to," nor is it always "the gentleman's place to comply with the young ladies' wishes, whatever they may be." True affection, even in the breast of those unquiet beings called "lovers," should not be exacting, and should give and take. Thus an old angler would tell you that if you play too much with your fish, he may snap the line and get away for ever.

JOURNALIST.—Your plan of writing descriptive articles for the local newspaper is quite practicable. Any of the papers would be glad probably to print your trial attempts, provided the following conditions were fulfilled. First, the subjects chosen must have a present-day interest and be associated with human activities. Thus, if you stand upon a hill and describe the scene below, knoll and vale, wood and river being formally sketched; your work will likely be ruthlessly dropped into the waste-paper basket; but, if you tell of the life of the people—farmers, laborers, and tradesmen—and use the scenery for purposes of relief and change, the editor's attention will be much more readily fixed. Secondly, your writing must be simple and not fine, showing carefulness of observation and soundness of judgment, and not the dexterous use of big words. Thirdly, you must make it clear that you do not expect payment for your amateur efforts. A good way of beginning to contribute to country newspapers is by writing letters under an assumed name on any local subject that is attracting attention; or, better still, by starting an original topic which is likely to create talk. Newspapers will always publish bright letters on current questions affecting the district in which they circulate. But be brief; do not write more than three pages of note-paper; and never write a word anonymously that you would shrink from writing if your name had to follow.

NO OTHER!

BY M. L. P.

No other face is with me when I sleep,
No other voice thrills in mine ears by day,
No other touch can make my pulses leap,
No other lips can teach me how to pray,
No other love, save only thine, can cure my sick soul's woe
And make my best thoughts flow!

No other! Yet am I constrained to live
As I must live, without thee, half my soul!
I know thy love is not still thine to give,
I know thy heart can never make mine whole.
No other fate but this for me, to burn away my life
In Passion's wasting strife!

The Law of Life.

BY IDA LEMON.

BACON again! And, my dear Nellie, I wish you would tell Maria that it is necessary to make bacon warm, at any rate. No, thank you, dear, I can't touch it. With my digestion in its present state I should be unfit to work if I even attempted a square inch of it. Are there any eggs in the house? I might venture on an egg."

"There are only shop eggs, dear. New laid are so expensive, just at present."

"Well, I must have something. I can't possibly work on an empty stomach. I'll ring for the joint."

Mrs. Lawrence sighed faintly. The joint was intended for the children's dinner.

Hubert attacked the meagre leg of mutton with zest. His wife toyed with the unpalatable bacon, then laid down her knife and fork, baffled in her endeavor to eat. She was pale, and there were dark hollows beneath her eyes. She looked haggard, and older than her husband, though in reality she was six years his junior. His friends complained that she was dowdy.

"Are you going to do those articles that Mr. Nicholson suggested to you, Hubert?"

"Perhaps, my dear. But I can't begin them this morning. I had an idea for a poem last night, and I want to start it at once. It so took possession of me that I could not sleep."

"I didn't sleep either," said Mrs. Lawrence plaintively.

"I'm afraid I disturbed you, dear. I was restless I know. But you can't imagine what it is to be in a creative mood. The mind suffers in the effort to embody the inspiration, but conception is pure joy. I was carried away by the possibilities of my subject. Indeed, but for the cold, I was tempted to get up at once, and begin the poem. Several lines formed themselves."

Mrs. Lawrence nodded vacantly. She was wondering if a pound of steak would eke out the mutton, and whether Maria would be offended if she asked her to warm up the bacon for her own luncheon.

"You don't seem to take much interest in it, Nellie."

"Oh yes, I do—indeed, I do, dear. And what is the subject?"

She fixed her weary eyes on him—the eyes which once had grown brighter at his coming, and sweeter for thoughts of him who had been her girlhood's ideal.

"Well, I shall call it 'The Law of Life,' because the law of life, of all life, seems to me to be sacrifice, and that is my theme. Now you see"—he pushed aside his plate, and leant his elbow on the table—"you see, dear, there are, so to speak, two sorts of sacrifice, and that is what I want to lay special stress on.

"I don't know if the subject had been dealt with before; it may have been, probably has; but I am convinced it has not been dealt with in my way, at any rate in poetry. There is the sacrifice which is what I may call involuntary, and under this class we must include all inferior creatures.

"The law of the survival of the fittest which holds throughout creation, entails the annihilation of the unfit; the greater feeds on the lesser, the strong triumphs over the weak, the higher organisms absorb the lower. But"—and here Hubert took up the spoon and emphasised his remarks with taps on the saucer, which had the effect of recalling Nellie's wandering attention—"but, the mistake is, to imagine there is any merit in such sacrifice. There is no merit. How can there be? It is purely the result of incompetence.

"The person or thing sacrificed is passive not active, and there is no more reason to glorify any one for consenting to be sacrificed, than for catching the measles. Submission is weakness. Self-assertion is strength. Strength is to be striven after. Do you follow me?"

"Yes—yes, dear, I think so," said Mrs. Lawrence, with a smile that was strangely pathetic, because somehow her eyes looked frightened. "You mean that the weak must give themselves up, and so there is no goodness in it. But don't you think there might be—well, there might be something noble in the way they submit. I mean, you may have to do a thing and yet—Oh, dear, I can't express myself as I want to—but——"

She paused, and began rolling crumbs of bread into a ball with her thumb and forefinger; from the action of her throat it seemed as if she were with difficulty swallowing some hard substance; but her mouth was empty.

"Well, and then there is the second class," went on Hubert, with a wave of his hand as if to push aside an objection not worth looking at; "and it is especially on that that I wish to dwell. My dear Nellie"—he flung himself back in his chair, and ran his fingers through the fair hair which he wore somewhat long in front so that it had a trick of falling over his forehead—"there is enough to compose a book if one lays down for meditation all the heads in that.

"There is the sacrifice of the strong for the weak—the voluntary sacrifice you understand, such instance as the sacrifice of Buddha; then the sacrifice of mothers to their children, inspired by love—ah, you like that I see! Yes, yes, we must appeal to all sides of humanity; that is the poet's mission. Ah, and the poet himself, he makes a sacrifice; he gives his soul, his heart, his intellect—to whom? To an ungrateful world which cannot understand him because he is so far above it; but his sacrifice is not in vain, for he elevates, he teaches, and at last the world is fitted to receive his message. The martyrs of science, of art, of religion, all have been voluntary sacrificers, priests offering themselves on their own altars. I must adduce them as examples—think, my dear, of the long line of them—the vista which presents itself to the imagination is glorious—it is positively overwhelming!"

The poet rose from his chair, and began pacing up and down the room. At last he stopped opposite his wife, and gazed at her. She was still absently making balls of bread, though she had accumulated a small pile of them.

"Well?" he said, for she had made no remark on his harangue.

At his voice, which was louder than usual and not free from displeasure, she started, and glanced up.

"I was thinking, dear," she said deprecatingly, "won't it be rather—long?"

"I don't know," he answered shortly. "Perhaps." And he turned on his heel.

"Good heavens," he remarked mentally, "what it is to have a wife so devoid of soul, of imagination! She has absolutely no sympathy for art. I might as well speak to a stone. Better! It would be less aggravating."

"When it is done," said Mrs. Lawrence slowly, "do you suppose you will sell it soon, dear?"

"I don't know. How can I tell?" he answered abruptly.

"Hubert."

"What?"

"When will you begin those articles for Mr. Nicholson?"

"Oh, when I am in the mood for them. Really, Nellie, it's no good worrying me about them. How could I do them well when my mind is full of something else? It's absurd, you know; it's unreasonable."

"But Mrs. Nicholson pays so promptly, and—and—" She passed her hand across her eyes.

"What?"

"Oh, Hubert! There's so much to think of. I know it's very silly of me and I don't want to spoil your pleasure in your work, but—fame is so long in coming, and we are so very poor."

"That is so like a woman," Lawrence cried impatiently. "Don't you see that in the future I shall earn much more than if I did hack-work now. You don't want me to prostitute my intellect, I suppose. It's a wicked thing to do—it's sinning against the gifts of Providence."

"I don't know," said Mrs. Lawrence, who was crying feebly, but—the children—and I am so tired."

She laid her arms down on the table, and hid her face on them.

"Pshaw!" muttered Hubert.

Then he came over to her, and patted the bowed head. Mrs. Lawrence's hair had been black, but it was already beginning to be streaked with gray. Her husband noticed it at this moment, and somehow it annoyed him. He was a great admirer of beauty, and he imagined he loved his wife.

"There, there," he said soothingly, "you're overdone, my dear! I must manage for you to have a little holiday. There is sure to be a cheque before" (how often his wife had heard this—it had lost its power to comfort now). "Sure to be. Come, cheer up. You unnerve me. And I shan't be able to work, and then of course we can't earn. There, that's right," as she looked up, and tried to smile; "I can't bear to see you unhappy, little woman. You used to be so bright."

"Was I?" she thought drearily. "It all seems so long ago." But she kissed her husband with lips that still trembled. He had not lost his fascination for her, though her idolatry was over long ago. She realized that he had eyes, but saw not, and ears, but did not hear, like those whom the foolish heathen worshipped; and, so though she still made sacrifices to him, they were made through compulsion and sometimes even laid on the altar with scorn and unbelief.

"That is right. Now, I will take a turn in the garden, and then I will set to work at once. Don't let any of the children come to the study, and if I don't appear at luncheon, you might send me a cup of coffee and some biscuits. Perhaps you'll bring it in yourself. Maria always makes such a clatter, and it's disturbing."

He went off, to work himself into a frame of mind suitable for poetical composition. Mrs. Lawrence sobbed for a few minutes, but she could not indulge herself. Besides, she had a horror of what she called "giving way." She took her key-basket before long, and made her way to the kitchen, to give orders to the general servant.

"There ain't much in the house," said Maria, "'cepting fragments. There was a bit of mack'rel, but I giv' it to Master Johnny for supper; what with the heat and that, I don't hold with keepin' fish on hand; and I expec' master's made a hole in the mutton. Why didn't he eat his bacon? Ain't bacon good enough for him?"

"It was a little underdone, Maria. And you know how particular the master has to be with his delicate digestion!"

Maria snorted.

"Him on indigestion! why, he's as hearty as a ostrich. I've lived with a dyspeptic gentleman, and I knows how indigest'n takes a person—there's redness of nose, and flatilence after meals, and things o' that sort. Indigestion indeed! I wonder he don't engage a perfeshunal cook if he's so particular."

"Hush, Maria!" said Mrs. Lawrence with dignity.

"If I don't suit, p'raps I'd better go where I'm appreciated," said Maria sulkily.

"But you do suit us, Maria. I am quite satisfied with you on the whole. I think you are a very good, patient girl."

"And so one had need be," said the servant, a little mollified. "Howsoendever, I shall be havin' a home of my own before long."

"Don't be in a hurry to marry, Maria," said Mrs. Lawrence, gently. "It isn't all love-making, you know."

"Oh, I'm not in any hurry partikler. Nor's Jim. We've kep' company for four years, and he only mentioned furniture last week. One can't take it a man's in earnest till he mentions furniture, but that means business, and when they means business it don't do to thwart 'em. Well, touchin' that mutton, shall we make up with a bit of stew? I've got some onions, and I can run round to Curtis'. Oh, I remember——"

"What Maria?" as the girl reddened and looked awkward.

"Why, m'm," said Maria, fidgetting with her apron, "it ain't as I want to make you uncomfortable, but——"

"Well?"

"Why, last time I went there, that day the ribs wasn't quite fresh, the man was quite impert'nent. 'You'd better tell your missus,' says he, 'that when people don't pay their bills, they can't expec' to be served like them as does.' 'That's false,' says I; 'my missus pays reg'lar.' 'Do she!' says he, 'why they're the talk of the neighborhood, and you'd better keep your eye on your wages.' 'Which, none of your insinivations,' says I; 'I've had 'em reg'lar at the quarter, and I don't put my foot in this shop agen.' And I took up my fresh ribs and walked. You'll excuse me mentionin' of it, ma'am."

"Yes, Maria," said Mrs. Lawrence absently. She gave the rest of her orders, and went upstairs. Before going to the nursery, she re-entered the sitting-room, and unlocked her desk. She took out her account book, and ran her eye down it. Then she hurried across the passage to her husband's room. He was not there, but still enjoying his saunter round the garden. She went to the window, and called him. "Hubert," And again, as he took no notice: "Hubert."

He strolled down the gravel path, and stood under the window, the sunlight on his handsome, careless, sensuous face.

"What do you want, Nellie? I asked particularly not to be disturbed."

"But you are not working yet, dear."

"I am. It's so silly to imagine that one is not working unless one's a sitting at a table with a pen in one's hand. My brain is most active, and I have already completed the first stanza. I think I shall adopt the metre of——"

"Hubert, excuse my interrupting you, but I have so much to do, I can't wait. Didn't you give Curtis the bank-note I gave you on the 10th. I want the receipt."

"Oh, my dear girl, I meant to tell you. Yes, yes." He fidgetted a little, uneasily, with his foot, kicking a stone away.

"You did?"

"No, I didn't take it to Curtis after all."

"What did you do with it?" Mrs. Lawrence's face had grown very white and stiff-looking. "You know I particularly asked you to go there because I couldn't leave baby."

"And so I should have done, my dear, only I remembered that I was out of foolscap, and as I went down the High Street, I got some at Berdoe's and when I handed him that note, he came down upon me for something I owed him for some old editions he had procured for me. I wouldn't quarrel with Berdoe for the world; it would be so unpleasant; besides, he knows so many professional men; so I thought it best to settle with him. Of course one can't explain to a man like that that one hasn't got the money. It would be infra dig. And Curtis can wait. He's a great deal better off than we are."

Mrs. Lawrence moistened her lips before she spoke again.

"But the money was not yours to spend, Hubert. It was what my father sent me for my birthday."

"My dear Nellie, you quibble. If you were good enough to spend the money on paying a bill, it surely couldn't matter which bill was paid. But for heaven's sake don't let's quarrel about it. Nothing could be more vulgar."

Her eyes flashed, and the color leapt into her cheeks. But she did not speak. She stepped back into the room, and crushed her hands on her heaving bosom.

"I thought my spirit was broken," she said between her clenched teeth, "but it isn't—it isn't. I have enough left to hate him—to hate him." Then, frightened at her own vehemence, she ran from the room and up to the nursery to take refuge with her children.

Hubert meanwhile went back to his meditations.

"I am glad Nellie does not nag like some women," he thought comfortably; "I don't think she'll allude to the subject again. And I shall soon be able to pay her back. Of course she couldn't exactly realise how inexpedient it would be to quarrel with Berdoe. . . . Dear, dear. I wish I could have a study out of the house. Nothing is so deadening as these domestic worries. Let me think, where I was?——

"'And, drunk with its own wine, the reeling mind——' No, I hardly like that."

"'The reeling mind, intoxicate——' No, that's worse. When one gets hold of an image, it haunts one. 'And with its wine——' That's ridiculous! I think I'll keep the other:

"'And drunk with its own wine, the reeling mind
Pursues its way, nor feels the mocking wind,
The scorching sun, ...'

"Perhaps 'heeds' is a better word than 'feels.' I suppose I may as well go into the study, now. The sun is getting rather overpowering."

Mrs. Lawrence could not afford to keep a nurse. She had in occasionally a nurselet who had not yet flowered into full dignity. This young person helped Maria, and looked after Mabel when she would otherwise have had to be left alone. Mabel was the youngest child, and she was three years old; Johnny, who was eight, went to school, only just at present he was having his summer holidays; and Norah was two years younger than he.

When the nursemaid was otherwise occupied, Norah kept an eye on her little sister. Mrs. Lawrence saw as much of them as she could, but as she had to do some of the housework, and to make their clothes, it was not possible for her to enjoy their society at leisure.

The children loved their faded, gentle little mother, and ran to meet her joyfully when she opened the nursery door. The nurse, a pale, solemn-faced maiden, who looked as if Nature had pinched her features playfully before she had cast her on one side, was washing up the breakfast-things, pausing every now and then to scratch the tip of her thin nose with a damp forefinger. She loved Mrs. Lawrence too, and a twitching of her mouth to one side, which was her manner of smiling, testified to her pleasure at seeing her.

"Ma," shouted Johnny, brandishing a letter before her, "I am glad you've come up! Look here, this is from Chesley. And what do you think? He's in Folkestone—they've got a house for the holidays; no end of larks. And can I go, he says?"

His cheeks and eyes were bright with excitement as he gave her the letter to read. Johnny was Mrs. Lawrence's favorite child, her eldest, and her only son. She kissed him as she took the grimy epistle, with the wild handwriting, from his hot hand. Johnny was getting too old for these demonstrations; he began to resent them as a slur on his manliness. But he submitted now, with a good grace, and even returned the caress; he wished to coax his mother, and be in her good books.

"May I?"

Mrs. Lawrence read through the note. It was short, and yet it took her a long time to reach the end. At any rate, it seemed to Johnny ages before she answered him.

"I don't—see—how you can, sonny."

"Oh, mother!"

It cut her to the heart to see how the little face fell. She turned away her own with faltering resolution.

"Let me read it through again, dear."

Johnny began to kick with impatience; he had mastered the contents of the note in a few seconds. He could not see why his mother took so long. He did not know that she was making mental calculations all the time her eyes were fixed on the words which ran sloping down the page:

"DEAR LAWRENCE,—We have been here a week, and it is splendid. I go in a boat and catch fish. At least father catches, and I go in the boat you wouldn't believe how jolly it is, and the weather is jolly. I hope you are quite well. Would you like to come hear, my mother she would be very pleased and you could learn to swim with me, it would be jolly. I hope you can. Are you learning your holiday tarsk? I am not yet. Rite soon and tell me, "Your affecshunate friend,

"TOM TAYLOR CHESLEY."

"P.S. I mean rite soon about if you can come, not the holiday tarsk.

"P.S. (2) My mother says 'when.'

"TOM TAYLOR CHESLEY."

"Well, mother—oh, don't say 'No.'"

"I don't want to, Johnny."

He sidled up to her and put his arm round her neck.

"You needn't funk about the sea, because I'll be ever so careful. Besides, Chesley says his father was a sailor, once; and all the boys have gone somewhere, I'm the only one who stayed at home for the holidays. And it is rather hot, now isn't it?"

"Darling, I wish we could have gone away—all of us." And Mrs. Lawrence lifted the pale baby on to her lap.

"I want to go to the sea too, mamma," said Norah. "I remember last year with Aunt Annie, and it was nice; and I've got my pail still, and the spade. Can't I go if Johnny goes?"

"You're not asked, stupid," said Johnny. "Chesley doesn't care about girls, and besides——"

"Hush, Johnny! Perhaps we'll go away together, one of these days, Norah darling, when papa's ship comes home."

"And take baby?"

"Take ba-bee," lisped Mabel.

"Yes, my precious," said her mother, clasping her closer.

More than Johnny or Norah she longed for the sea. It seemed to her that she would be perfectly happy, if she might only sit quite still for a little while, and feel the sea-spray on her face, and taste the saltness of the air, and let the wind blow on her forehead.

Oh, if she might go straight away—away from the heat, and the weariness, and the cares, and the sense of never being alone! Ah, but no—she must have her children with her; and watch them playing and running, hear their laughter, while they gained color and beauty and strength. That would rest her too.

"Then I can write and say 'Yes,' mother. And I'll want some new shoes, please, because there's a hole in mine."

"And so there is a hole in mine, too," chirped Norah, who always imitated her brother. "Look!" and balancing herself precariously on one, she raised the other for inspection.

"Oh, Johnny, my dearie, I don't see how we can afford it."

Johnny, who was already fumbling at his little writing-case, turned round suddenly, and dropped his ink-pot with a crash.

"Do you mean, I mayn't?" he cried, his face crimson with anger and surprise. "Oh, it is a shame."

"Lor, Master Johnny," screamed the nursemaid, "the ink's a comin' hout. Oh, I never did!" and she rushed to his side and began wiping the floor with the tea-cloth, which eventually she employed for rubbing her nose-tip, the constant irritation of which now inopportunely asserted itself.

Mrs. Lawrence was torn between a desire to laugh, and a desire to cry, as she looked from the pale face of the maid with its blackened features, to the red, wrathful visage of her little boy.

"It is a shame!" repeated Johnny. "All other people go away in the summer, and I don't see why we should be poked up in London."

"You have the garden to play in, my child."

"That's no good. It isn't a big garden. Besides, it isn't like the sea."

"No," said Mrs. Lawrence, her sense of the ridiculous asserting itself, and she laughed.

Johnny laughed too. His anger was never of long duration. And he took this as a good omen.

"Oh, mother, you don't mean 'No' really, do you?"

"I don't want to mean it, dearie. But I don't see what we can do. You see I'm not rich, like Mrs. Chesley. You'd want a new suit of clothes as well as your railway-fare; and shoes, and a hat; and I'm very short of money just at present."

She thought of the five pounds and sighed.

"I'll give up my pocket-money, mother, till it's paid off."

"Oh, Johnny, you have as much idea of what things cost—as your father"—she was going to add, but said instead—"as the baby. A penny a week is only four and fourpence a year, my lamb, and you would have to go without your pennies for a great many years before you paid it off."

"Oh, very well," said Johnny submissively. He was not pleased with the prospect of having no toffee for years to come. "I suppose I'll have not to go, but I do wish we had a rich father. It's no fun when you can't do things."

He took the sheet of paper and began to write.

"Look here, mother," he said suddenly, his eyes full of tears. "I don't know how I can tell Chesley. I'm not going to let him see how poor we are. He wouldn't understand." The little voice was as proud as its tremulousness would allow.

Mrs. Lawrence ought perhaps to have demonstrated to him that poverty was no disgrace, and that it was sinful to be ashamed of it. But somehow she never thought of that. Her own sensitiveness made her realise exactly how her little son was feeling about it; besides, his attempt at resignation seemed to her more touching than his anger. It was so good of him to try and be brave, poor little fellow, and it was very hard that he should not have a bright childhood. And he needed a change. He was growing and his face was thinner than she liked to see it.

"Johnny," she said desperately, "you must go.

"But," he replied, his shining eyes contradicting the words, "I don't want to if it's going to the very dear. I'll say no, if you'd rather. I don't care so much, mother."

"Yes," said Mrs. Lawrence, "you must go. But don't write to Chesley yet. We must see about trains first. Norah, play with baby a little while, will you, dearie? You can go out in the garden if you like, only keep in the shady part."

She went up to her bedroom, and locked the door. Then she knelt down, hiding her face in her thin hands. She had retained the simple faith of her girlhood. If she had not been in the habit of taking her troubles to God, she would have given in long ago, and grown bitter and callous.

"Dear Father," she prayed, "show me what I can do. Do not let my little ones lose the sunshine of their childhood though I am left in shadow. I want them to be happy. Help me not to have hard thoughts of their father, but to forgive him his faults as I hope mine will be forgiven. Oh, my Father, I am very tired, but Thou canst give me strength. If there is any sacrifice I can make, I will do it so gladly."

At the word "sacrifice" there entered her mind the words her husband had said to her that morning at breakfast. She stopped in her praying, and a queer little smile came into her eyes.

It seemed incongruous that the man who had never given up a pleasure, or a wish, or a penny for others should feel competent to write a poem on the joys and pains of sacrifice, and be, as he professed, carried away by the beauty of the subject.

Ah well, he thought nothing of her sacrifices, they were "involuntary." She was not good enough to want to make them, and they were prompted by necessity. What had he said?

"The mistake is, to imagine there is any merit in such sacrifice. There is no merit. It is the result of incompetence."

Well, she was one of the "inferior creatures" to whom he had alluded, and it was at any rate her duty, if not her glory, to submit. And she could do her duty.

She crouched down by the bed for some little time, waiting. She hoped that somehow God would help her. At last she sprang up. An idea had occurred to her which she was surprised had never suggested itself before. She could get rid of her jewelry! She took down the Japanese case where she kept it, and poured the contents of the drawers on to the bed. They did not make a very grand display. There were some coral ornaments she had had in her childhood, a locket or two, the pearls her mother had given her at her confirmation—she kissed those and laid them on one side—a little diamond star which had been her husband's wedding present (she could not remember that she had ever received a present since), and a rather valuable bracelet which had been the gift of her father.

As she handled the bracelet she hesitated, pondering a second. Should she appeal to her father? No; she put aside the thought almost at once. He had never liked her husband, and it was all she could do to keep peace between them as it was. He was so fond of her, that for his sake she was obliged to hide from him as far as possible what her life really was.

And had he not so recently sent her five pounds, that he might be justified in asking how she had spent it? She laid the bracelet by the side of the star; then put those and the other trinkets, all but the pearls, into a box, and, shivering a little, unlocked the door.

As she tied her bonnet-strings before the glass she was shocked at her own face.

"How ugly I have grown," she thought, "and how old! After all, I am not the sort of person who needs jewelry."

It was very hot in the street. Mrs. Lawrence looked in vain for a shady side. The sun seemed to beat on her, and she felt weak and sick. But she set her lips together, and gathered all her resolution.

It was not very far to the High Street. As she called up a mental vision of her destination, she blushed, and her eyes smarted. She had looked in at the window sometimes, and wondered what different fates had led people to dispose of the queer, various, occasionally beautiful things, displayed there.

Perhaps after all most of the causes had been as unromantic, as commonplace as her own. "Coming down in the world," is an everyday occurrence, and as a rule attended with loss rather than increase of romance.

There is a dowdiness about it, a sordid side. . . . Mrs. Lawrence did not look romantic just then, and she certainly did not feel it. She was not exactly miserable. She had a consciousness that nothing mattered very much, that there were many disagreeable things in life, and this was one of them. It had to be gone through with. So she walked straight on till she reached the shop with its well-known sign.

She cast a glance round, but none of her few acquaintances were visible, and she rapidly pushed open the door, and hurried into the cool, dark, musty shop, where Mrs. Z. Moss, proprietress, was sitting, in the absence of her husband.

The pawnbroker's wife was a fat woman, who wore a bright print skirt and a loose blouse. She looked up lazily at Mrs. Lawrence. The latter felt a sharp pang that was almost envy of this woman. Her husband worked, and she could sit in a comfortable armchair in comparative idleness.

What a placid face she had, what plump cheeks, what twinkling eyes, and she was satisfied if only she could eat and drink well and read, as she had been doing, the penny love-stories of high life, with the illustrations of young dukes with sixteen inch waists, leaning carelessly against pillars, and making love to damsels seven feet high. Happy pawnbroker's wife!

The latter in her turn regarded Mrs. Lawrence, but she had not a sufficiently rapid brain to think about her till afterwards. She saw only a customer who looked ladylike, though she wore a shabby black dress and a faded bonnet; her face was a dull uniform pallor from the heat, and her eyes were sunk deep in her head. Mrs. Moss did not find her interesting. Her jewelry was more so, especially the bracelet.

"I suppose her husband drinks," Mrs. Moss said to herself, half an hour afterwards, when she again picked up her paper, and resumed the protestations of Sir Cyril Vane to the hard-hearted Lady Alicia.

"It seems very little," Mrs. Lawrence thought. And all the way home she wondered if Mr. Moss would have given her more.

"Never mind," she said aloud, when she was once more in her own room, and had bathed her face and hands, "I will take them out—some day. Perhaps when Hubert has finished his poem, and had it accepted." She smiled rather drearily, and went to the door.

"Johnny," she called.

"Master John is in the garden, m'm," said the nursemaid appearing. "Lor'm, you do look tired!"

"Yes, I've been out, and the sun is strong." She went down the stairs, holding on to the banisters. At the door of the study she paused. She remembered the time-table was in there. She knocked.

"May I come in, dear?"

Hubert made a movement of impatience. "How can one work with these constant interruptions?" he said mentally; but answered, with what seemed to him admirable self-control, "Certainly, my love."

"I am not going to disturb you," said Nellie, as she stepped into the cool, comfortable room—the prettiest in the house—"I want the A. B. C., that is all."

"It's on the table by the window."

Mrs. Lawrence extracted it from the fascinating litter of books and papers which strewed the table alluded to. Hubert scratched a little with his pen. He was afraid that if he gave his wife an opening for conversation she would stay. She, on her part, did not mean to mention Johnny's trip till all arrangements were made.

When she was at the door once more, she could not resist asking turning to look at him:

"How have you got on this morning, dear?"

"Pretty well,—oh, pretty well, thanks, Nellie. Not much in quantity you know, but excellent in quality. I'm fairly satisfied, on the whole. Eight lines is a decent morning's work. But still, to tell you the truth, the beauty of the subject makes me a bit dissatisfied. The difficulty is to do it justice."

The Lady in Black.

BY H. G. H.

THERE was not under the stars a happier man than I, Frederick Luscombe, on a certain January evening in the year 1880, when, with my young wife on my arm, I ascended the steps of the Casino at Monte Carlo.

Young, healthy, and prosperous—my father was of an old-established Midland banking-firm—married, just a week ago, to the girl I adored, it really seemed that I had nothing left to wish for.

Georgie and I were spending our honeymoon at Nice, but had run over to Monte Carlo for the day, and strolled into the Casino "just to look at the tables."

We did not intend to play; we should be sure to lose, Georgie said, quoting the proverb; "Happy in love, unlucky in play."

So for the first half hour we contended ourselves with looking on, while a friend whom we had encountered at the hotel where we dined pointed out the different celebrities for Georgie's benefit.

It was her first visit, and she looked about her with eager interest and curiosity.

"I am disappointed," she declared at last. "I expected it would be a scene of wild excitement; but all these people look as dull and decorous as if they were in church, and there are no 'types' among them."

"Look at that face opposite," I whispered—"the old lady in black. Isn't she 'typical' enough for you?"

She was a tall, gaunt old woman, spect-

rally thin, with haughty aquiline features which had once been handsome, and haggard dark eyes, unnaturally bright. Her face was calm and inscrutable as a mask, but her lips looked dry and feverish, and the withered claw-like hand she stretched out to deposit her stakes shook with suppressed agitation.

"What a weird old woman!" Georgie murmured. "Who is she, I wonder? Captain Fergusson, who is that old witch, opposite?"

"That old witch, my dear Mrs. Luscombe, is the Princess Vera Zaterinski."

"'Princess'"

"An authentic Russian Princess, widow of Prince Constantine Zaterinski, and one of the most inveterate gamblers in Europe. She has lost at play a princely fortune; has alienated children, relatives, and friends, and now is living miserably, Heaven knows how, with no companion or attendant but that ancient serving-man in shabby livery who is standing behind her chair."

"What a life! It ought to be a warning to us," my wife said solemnly; and almost in the same breath added inconsistently: "Frederick, I think I should like to stake a louis—just one, to see how it feels. Of course I shall lose, but never mind!"

But, in spite of the proverb, she did not lose, and, encouraged by her unexpected success, played on till she had accumulated a little heap of notes and gold, which she showed us in laughing triumph.

"There, you have gambled as much as is good for you," I said at last, drawing her away. "Look at your opposite neighbor, and be warned in time."

"Ah! poor thing, I wish I could have given her my luck," my wife answered, glancing compassionately at the old Princess, who had been losing heavily.

Though outwardly calm and unmoved as ever, her face was deadly pale, and her hand, on the forefinger of which gleamed a massive gold signet ring, closed convulsively on the worn leather pocket-book, from which she had just extracted a hundred-franc note.

"I believe that is her last stake," Georgie whispered. "Oh, I hope she will win this time!"

But again the Princess lost.

She watched as the croupier carelessly raked in her note with the other losings, then rose abruptly, with a look of such dumb despair as I trust I may never see on a human face again.

The other players made way for her; there was a tragic dignity in her figure which imposed respect, and the old manservant, who had been anxiously watching her, came forward with a deferential bow. Accepting the proffered support of his arm, she moved away with the majesty of a fallen queen.

"Poor thing!" Georgie repeated, as we too moved away. "Yes, I know it is her own fault, but I can't help pitying her. Now I have played myself I understand how fierce the temptation must be—how one is drawn on in spite of one's self."

"She has dropped her pocket-book," I remarked, as we passed the place where she had been sitting.

"Is it empty?" my wife inquired. "I thought so—perhaps that note was all she had left in the world! I wish—— Oh, Frederick," she broke off, with a sudden change of tone, clasping her hands on my arm, "I have such a lovely idea! Put my winnings in it and give it back to her."

"My dear child, she would be mortally offended," I objected. "She looks as proud as Lucifer."

"But she won't find it out till she gets home, and she will never see us again. Quick, before she is out of sight!"

I shrugged my shoulders, but without further protest placed a roll of notes in the inner pocket of the book, and, leaving Georgie in charge of my friend, hastened in pursuit of the Princess and her companion. They had left the gambling-rooms, and were passing through the outer hall.

"I beg your pardon, Madame," I said in French, "I think this is yours. You dropped it at the roulette table just now."

She looked at me vaguely a moment, as if the sense of my words had not reached her, then took it from my hand with a faint smile.

"Yes, it is mine. I thank you, sir," she answered, and bowing to me with high-bred courtesy, passed on.

A few moments later we too left the Casino by another entrance.

As we emerged from the heated rooms into the sweet, cool night air, Georgie drew a deep breath of relief.

"I am cured of gambling," she said, seriously. "The Princess Zaterinski's face is worth a hundred sermons. Frederick, let us go home."

* * * * * *

Three years passed before I saw Monte Carlo again—disastrous years for us!

The firm of which my father was the head had failed little more than a year after my marriage, in a financial crisis which brought many another house to ruin. My poor father did not long survive the blow, and I had to begin life afresh, hampered by a delicate wife and a young child.

For myself I was not afraid of poverty or hard work; I had courage, energy, and capacity enough to make my own way. It was for my wife I feared, my darling, Georgie, who was so little fitted to endure the least hardship or privation. She had not been strong since the birth of our child, and the doctors pronounced it imperatively necessary for her to spend the winter in the south.

I had managed to bring her to Nice, but our slender "reserve fund" would be soon exhausted, and I should compelled to take her back just at the bleakest period of the treacherous English spring.

My heart sank when I thought what might be the consequences.

She was always bright, hopeful, and unselfish, and if she had any fears about herself, never let me suspect them.

It was at her desire that I was at Monte Carlo this evening; it would "cheer me up" she said, though in fact it had quite an opposite effect. The happy memories the place brought back to me gave a keener edge to my present trouble.

However, I entered, and after wandering aimlessly for a time about the garish rooms, I found myself at the very table where Georgie and I had stood to watch the players.

Everything seemed exactly as it had been that night. The same motley crowd drifting to and fro, the same faces gathered round the tables; the same croupiers, with their monotonous cuckoo-cry. "Faites vos jeux—le jeu est fait; rien ne va plus!"

Almost unconsciously I took out my purse, and was about to place a twenty-franc piece on "Blanc," when a woman's voice behind me said quietly, in French: "Put it on the red."

I turned quickly, and found myself confronted by a face that seemed familiar to me, though I could not at first recall where I had seen it before; a face with thin, aquiline features, and deep-set dark eyes.

"On the red," she repeated, pointing to the table.

I recognized her then by that wasted hand with the gold seal-ring on the forefinger—it was the Princess Zaterinski.

Startling pale, and thinner if possible than ever, but otherwise unchanged.

Mechanically I complied—and won. I was about to take up my winnings when she interposed, in the same distinct, imperious undertone, audible to me alone: "Leave them."

Again I obeyed, and again won.

The next time it was a number she indicated, and once more her forecast proved correct.

I played on automatically, in obedience to her whispered dictates, and always with success.

My strange run of luck began to attract attention, and other players timidly followed my lead.

I "plunged" recklessly; doubled and trebled my stakes; still my good fortune held.

My heart beat fast and my hands trembled as, time after time, I gathered in a handful of notes and gold to add to the growing heap at my side.

The croupiers began to look queerly at each other, and a whisper ran round the table that if this phenomenal luck continued long enough, I should break the bank.

My excitement rose to fever heat. I played on as one in a dream, seeing nothing but the table before me, hearing nothing but the low distinct voice of my monitress, whose prompting never once misled me. I forgot my troubles, I thought neither of the past nor the future; all was effaced in the delirium of the moment.

How long I played I know not, for I had lost all count of time, but at last the monitory voice said quietly: "You have won enough. Go now, and never enter this place again."

Her words broke the spell.

"Madame——" I began quickly, turning to accost her, but she was already moving away.

She looked at me over her shoulder with a grave smile—a smile which haunted me long afterwards.

"I have paid my debt," she murmured. "Adieu!"

The next moment she had disappeared in the crowd.

I drew a deep breath, and looked incredulously at the money so strangely won, half fearing it was but fairy-gold, which would turn to dead leaves in my grasp. But no, it was solid and tangible; and as I realized what it represented—a fresh start in life for me, care and comfort for my wife, a provision for my child, my heart swelled with gratitude towards my strange benefactress, and I felt that I could not let her go unthanked.

I thrust my winnings into my pockets and hastily buttoned my coat over them, looking eagerly round in search of her.

"That old lady who was standing behind me just now—did you notice in which direction she turned?" I ask my neighbor as I rose.

The Frenchman looked at me in surprise.

"I saw no lady near you, Monsieur," he replied.

"Yes, yes—a tall old lady in black; the Princess Zaterinski. You must have seen her," I persisted; "she was close to us a moment ago!"

One of the croupiers, near whom I stood, paused with his rake suspended, and looked up at me.

"Whom did you say, Monsieur?" he demanded, in a tone of emphatic astonishment.

"The Princess Zaterinski."

He shook his head.

"You are mistaken. It could not have been the Princess you saw!"

"But I assure you that it was! I know her by sight—I have been here before!"

He shrugged his shoulders.

"It is quite impossible."

"Why impossible?" I demanded.

He paused to arrange the five-franc pieces in a neat little pile before him.

"Because, Monsieur, the Princess Zaterinski is dead," he answered deliberately. "She died at Nice a year ago, and is buried in the Russian cemetery there . . . Messieur, make your bets."

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

A Chinese new year sociable held in a prominent Chicago church a few evenings since has resulted in the formation of an Anti-Chinese Sunday School Society, which proposes to agitate against the custom of allowing young girls to act as teachers in Sunday schools where each Chinaman has a teacher to himself. The surprising thing is that organization or agitation should be necessary to demonstrate the unwisdom of such indiscriminate methods of religious training, which have been so fully discredited by the experience of New York and other cities.

A Mr. St. John has introduced a bill in the Massachusetts Legislature, entitled "An act for the suppression of indecent dances in public place," which provides that "no woman shall appear at a public performance in a dress the skirts of which do not come within at least four inches of the floor, and the waist of which shall be so constructed that no part of her person shall be exposed below the neck." Which neck? The neck of the dress or the neck of the wearer? If the latter, a still more puzzling question would arise which might require the united aid of the anatomists and lexicographers to determine.

China has at last one complete railway. It is a short line connecting two towns in the eastern part of the Great Chinese Wall where the latter runs down to the Gulf of Liau tung. There is a certain anachronism in the association of the "iron horse," so emblematic of our modern activity of [illegible], with the Chinese Wall, which stands as the personification of obstruction to free intercourse. However, this new Chinese railroad is itself an anomaly; it is not intended for traffic. It will carry neither merchandise nor passengers. Having been built simply for strategic purposes, it will be strictly confined to military uses. The Asian chair will continue to be the vehicle for overland journeys in China, and freight will still be carried along to poles borne on the shoulders of muscular Chinese porters.

Mr. Wynn Molesworth has invented and constructed a very ingenious "celestial clock," which was exhibited at the first winter meeting of the Royal Astronomical Society in London. The entire face of the clock rotates under a wire bar representing the equatorial horizon, and is regulated to perform one revolution in twenty-three hours fifty-six minutes four seconds, this being the time in which the earth turns once upon its axis. The apparent annual motion of sun, moon and planets in the opposite direction is effected by movable pins, while the north and south polar stars, that do not rise or set for us, rise and set simultaneously with the rest by a separate movement. There may be seen the entire heavens, with sun, moon, planets and constellations in their actual places, ever rising and setting as they rise and set in the heavens.

An opinion is gaining ground that nervous ailments are by no means exclusively the product of a fin de-siecle age, or even of a highly developed civilization. Dr. Rosse, of the Georgia Medical College, propounds a theory that any sudden change in the social habits and conditions of a race, at any stage of advancement, is sufficient to induce epilepsy in large quantities; and instances are given of its prevalence among many savage peoples, notably the Hurons and the Iroquois at the time of the Jesuit mission, and more particularly still the Sibiritic tribes, who may be thrown into convulsions by suddenly tapping on their huts.

Several gentlemen were discussing the methods employed to manufacture artificial brandies and spurious wines, at the Shoreham Hotel, in Washington, a few evenings ago, when ex United States Consul to Bordeaux, Mr. H. G. Knowles, of Wilmington, Del., joined the group and related his experience. "Yes, the brandies are well known. There's—— (naming a well-known exporter), he told me in Bordeaux that for twenty-four years he had not exported any pure brandies—nothing but imitated goods made up with common alcohol. And I know one house in Bordeaux that puts up white wines without a particle of pure wine in them; but, you know, that's all right—they have a market that calls for such stuff in South America, and perhaps some other places, and they furnish what the trade calls for."

Among the superstitions indulged in by the sailors is that the discovery of a dead cow, floating in the ocean, is an omen of evil. When the veteran "salts" on board the steamship Etruria observed the floating carcass of a cow in mid-ocean recently they said there was trouble in store for the ship. The next day the eccentric of the Etruria's engine became deranged, and the ship lay to for 10½ hours making repairs. Eight hours before the accident to the eccentric the Etruria passed the large steamship Burgermeister Peterson, with her rudder and rudder-post gone. She was making a jury rudder, and signaled that she needed no assistance, but would like to be reported. She also, in the opinion of the Etruria's veterans, must have passed the dead cow. The New York, which had trouble with the eccentric of her port engine is about the same place where the Etruria was disabled, did not report the cow.

PATENTS

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Our Young Folks.

THE DUTCH DOLL.

BY J. R. KAMWOOD.

THERE was once a little flake of pure white snow which lay on the window-sill all through a long, long winter. But at last the sun came and melted the little snow-flake, and it went away and became a tiny snow-cloud, which floated about in the beautiful blue sky for ever and ever.

* * * * * *

Many, many years ago, there lived in Holland a little boy named Dirk Niewkerke. He was a short sturdy little man, with rosy cheeks, bright brown eyes, and soft curly hair.

Though he was a little Dutchman, he enjoyed playing games and turning cart-wheels in the dusty road quite as much as any small Yankee, and he was not the tiniest bit fonder of school than any other laddie of ten summers old who is well, and strong, and overflowing with good spirits.

He was rather a noisy little boy by nature, and a bit of a tease too; and oh, how he loved a joke!

But there was one room in his grandmother's cottage where he was always quiet and as gentle as the old granny herself. There was one person whom he never teased or worried, and with whom he was always quiet and good.

And this person was his own little sister Kaatje—poor little lame Kaatje, who was never able to go out or play with the other children, and who always lay pale and quiet in her little bed, too weak to sit up and too ill to have many visitors.

Day after day, week in, week out, Kaatje lay there, so frail and delicate, like a little snowflake, which might melt away at any moment, and disappear altogther.

One evening the grandmother was knitting by the fire, with tiny three-year-old Klein at her feet. The wind was howling round the cottage, whistling a shrill "Whew-ew-ew! I'll blow the roof off in a minute, and shatter the old place into a thousand bits. Whew-ew-ew!"

And the tall Dutch clock in the corner seemed to answer solemnly—

"Tick, tock! tick, tock! I'll take care of the house. I've looked after it all these years, and I'll not let it come to any harm now. Tick, tock!"

Presently the door flew open, and in came Dirk, carrying a small log in his hands.

"Well, Dirk," said old Vrouw Niewkerke: "so you have brought me a log for the fire, my boy?"

But Dirk shook his head.

"No, grandmother," he said, "it is not for the fire: it is too good. It is for me to make a doll for dear little Kaatje."

"A doll!" answered the old lady angrily, "a doll! when we want warm fires, and have no money to buy fuel with! Oh, Dirk, you wasteful, wicked boy!"

"But poor Kaatje!" pleaded Dirk. "She has nothing at all to amuse her, and we have no money to buy her anything for Saint Nicholas's day."

"That we cannot help," said Vrouw Niewkerke. "I would buy the child toys if I could afford it, but, alas!"—and the good woman finished with that expressive foreign gesture, a shrug of her shoulders.

But Dirk pleaded for his little sister, and looked so disappointed and miserable, that the grandmother gave in, and he set to work on the doll.

He worked at it every evening, and as the pile of chips grew larger and the block of wood began to look more like a doll, even "granny" grew interested, and volunteered to make clothes for it when it was finished.

The month of December came, bringing frost and snow, and little Kaatje lay watching the big flakes which fell so softly from the gray sky, while her grandmother sat closer than ever to the scanty fire, and drew her threadbare shawl round her poor old shoulders, and longed for the thaw.

But not so Dirk. He was in radiant spirits; for was not his doll nearly finished? and did not every day bring him nearer to the feast of St. Nicholas, when he would be able to gladden Kaatje's heart with her new toy?

One snowy afternoon Dirk set off for a neighboring village, with a few coppers he had earned in his pocket, to buy a lovely black curly wig for Kaatje's doll. It was a long walk and a cold one, but hardly Dirk did not mind that, and trudged cheerfully onward.

It was dark before he was on his way home, and the snow beat into his face, and made his cheeks blue and icy. And worse than that, he began to feel hungry and very, very sleepy indeed, till at last he sat down under a tree and fell asleep.

When he awoke, a man was bending over him, and a lantern shone full in his face, and Dirk recognized one of the villagers, who had found him and was about to take him home.

The boy had caught a bad chill, and was in bed for some days, but he didn't mind: not he! He would soon get well again, and he had finished his doll!

The feast of St. Nicholas had come and gone, and Dirk was well and about once more, but little Kaatje was worse. She still lay white and fragile in her bed, but no longer lonely and alone: no, on the pillow by her side a smiling wooden face might always be seen, and two round blue doll-eyes were ever staring cheerfully at the ceiling; and Kaatje had never been so happy in all the seven years of her weary life of sickness.

It was Christmas Eve, and Kaatje lay clasping her wooden companion in her arms. The door opened, and Dirk came softly in.

"Sneeuwvlok," ("snowflake") he said, using his favorite name for the child, "Sneeuwvlok, the thaw is coming; the snow will soon be gone. Are you glad, darling?"

"No," answered Kaatje, "not for myself. I love the dear soft white stuff, and I am never cold; but I shall be glad for granny, and you, and Klein, Dirk. Do you know, I used to make up games with the snow-flakes when I was lonely?"

"Poor Kaatje," said Dirk. "But you aren't lonely now, dear?"

"No, no; never now!" answered the little girl, kissing her doll. "And I shall like to see the sun again, but I shall be sorry to say good-bye to the snow."

Dirk left her to go to sleep; but in half an hour, when he looked in again, he found her quite still and white, with her doll in her arms.

Dirk leaned over the bed to kiss her, and then starting back, he cried, "Granny!"

The grandmother and little Klein came and stood by the bed, and Dirk chafed the icy hands; but it was too late! A ray of the Everlasting Sunshine had shone into the little room, and melted the tiny snow-flake, and—thank Heaven, she was not a cripple now.

* * * * * *

It is nearly thirty years since that sad Christmas Eve. Dirk is a grown man and a celebrated artist, but he has not forgotten "Sneeuwvlok." No; carefully put away in a corner of his studio a roughly-made Dutch doll may be found: she has never been played with since Kaatje's death, and the artist treasures her dearly as a keep-sake from the sister who never seems far from him.

And on winter evenings, when the wind howls round his house, as it used to howl round the cottage long ago, Dirk and his wife and children gather round the fire, while a little golden-haired maiden (his own little Kaatje) climbs upon his knee, begging for a story; and then Dirk remembers the little white face upon the pillow, pressed close to a staring wooden countenance, and sadly and reverently he tells them the story of the Dutch doll.

TUNNY-FISHING IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.—The tunny is caught along the Adriatic coast, near Abbazo (Istria, Austria), during the end of April and the first part of May. At this time the tunnies, which attain a length of from eight to twelve feet, and weigh up to twelve hundred pounds, leave their submarine hiding places in the bottom of the Mediterranean, and travel in large shoals toward the coast for breeding in the sea-weed. Before the arrival of the fish, the shores are crowded by fishermen and spectators, and a watchman is perched on the outer end of a ladder-like frame which extends from the coast far out into the ocean. The watchman on this tower can readily detect the coming of the fish by their striking against nets and causing a disturbance on the water. The nets are set in such a manner as to form labyrinthine chambers extending from the coast about a mile out into the ocean. As soon as the watchman discovers the approach of the fish, he gives the signal to those on shore, and a general rush is then made for the boats, which are rowed out rapidly to the sea, to assist in driving the approaching shoal into the nets. The fish pass through the various chambers formed by the nets, until they finally pass through the second last one, called the golden chamber, which has but one exit, leading into the death chamber. As soon as the manager in charge finds that as sufficient number of fish have entered the last chamber, he gives a signal to draw in the outer nets from the sea and shore to close the outermost chambers, to prevent the fish from escaping to sea. The fish are then killed in the death chamber by means of iron-clad clubs, wielded by the fishermen. During a season the above is repeated from about ten to fifteen times at one and the same place, and as many as six hundred fish have been caught in one season.

SINGING FOR HIS LIFE.—John Abell, a celebrated singer and musician who lived in the reign of Charles II., had a very great notion of himself, and would not perform unless he pleased.

There is a funny story told of how he was once made to sing against his will.

While traveling abroad for pleasure he came into the town of Warsaw.

News was brought to the palace of the famous English singer's arrival, and Frederick Augustus, the King of Poland, immediately sent word that he desired Abell to appear before him.

"Tell his Majesty," replied John curtly, "that it suits me not."

Back went the court messenger with a wry face; he knew his master's temper too well.

"Tell Master Abell," thundered the king, "that I will have him come! And take you, boy, three stout fellows with you."

The messenger and the three stout fellows between them managed to carry out the royal wish, and presently marched triumphantly up to the palace with their unwilling captive.

The king was awaiting them in the great hall, where he had seated himself in a balcony that ran all round the sides. About him an immense chair hung from the roof by a rope.

"Now then, into the chair and up with him," cried Frederick Augustus, with a chuckle; "we'll soon see if our song-bird won't sing in his cage. Up with him, my merry men all!"

And up in the air swung Abell, who still refused to open his mouth. When he gave a glance downward, however, he changed his mind. Into the hall beneath him a number of wild bears had been turned loose.

"Sing, sirrah!" the king shouted, "or down you go to play with my brown babies."

One look at those "brown babies," growling and snarling below in a very untaby-like manner, was sufficient to convince the stubborn John.

Sing he did, and he often used to declare in after days that he never sang so well in his life as when he was hanging there, a hundred feet high above the fierce beasts.

THE TID-BIT OF THE TURKEY.—Many will recall the oft-repeated story of the young epicure, Brillat Savarin's son, who ordered thirty turkeys for his dinner. When his father reprimanded him for such extravagance on an occasion when he dined alone, the youth recalled the fact that there was one portion of the turkey which his father had always reserved for himself—the very tid-bit of the bird—and, as there were but two small portions of it in each bird, the order could in no way be called extravagant. This tid-bit is known as the "oyster" of turkey; and probably not one carver in twenty can tell exactly where it lies. It is not, as many suppose, a piece of the white meat of the breast. The breast is composed of only two distinct layers on each side, the upper and the lower fillets. The "oyster," in fact, is a portion of exceedingly tender dark meat which lies in a hollow on each side of the backbone, near and just above the second joint. By examining the bare carcass of a carved turkey, the two hollows where the "oysters" lie will be easily perceived, and one will note that their shape is a long oval. Unhappily this tid-bit is often ignored by the carver, or is sliced with the second joint. It should be served intact to any one at the table who can appreciate the best bit of the bird.

THE carelessness of women who carry costly jewels about with them is proverbial. Miss Levina Noble lost a diamond necklace at the French ball said to be worth $12,000, and the other night Mme. Nordica lost a $2,000 diamond clasp at the Metropolitan Opera House. You very seldom hear of a man losing a diamond, and he carries diamonds somewhat recklessly in his shirt and cuffs. The people who have charge of the theatres are continually picking up jewels after the audience has left the house, and the box-offices report that they are almost invariably reclaimed by women.

THE WORLD'S HAPPENINGS.

Russia's standing army numbers 820,000 men.

Only one person in 15,000 reaches the age of 100 years.

France gathers a window tax on more than 9,000,000 houses.

Scientists are of the opinion that some icebergs last for 200 years.

One factory in Richmond produces 600,000,000 cigarettes every year.

Electric irons for laundries and shirt factories are becoming popular.

Thirty-one persons died of actual starvation in London last year.

An automatic sculpturing machine is the invention of M. Delin, of Paris.

The farmer in Japan who has ten acres of land is looked upon as a monopolist.

A home for invalid servants, the gift of Mrs. C. Davis English, is to be built near wyn, Pa.

Over 27,000 students are estimated to be attending the leading German Universities during the present term.

Botany, German and French have been added as new acquirements for admission to the Yale Scientific School.

Montana, it is asserted, has produced nearly one-third of the gold, silver, copper and lead mined in the United States.

Maine is said to have 20,000 square miles of pine forests. The lumber industry, it is estimated, sends out 400,000,000 feet every year.

A milkman's mule, in Louisville, Ky., returned to duty after a vacation of 12 months recently, and remembered the door of every customer.

James Sladen is in jail at Puyallup, Washington, charged with stealing a hot stove. The only evidence against him is that his hands are singed.

A new party, to be called the "Poor Men's Party," is being organized at Shelbyville, Illinois. It is proposed to elect no man to a local office who has possessions valued at more than $1500.

A French authority estimates that there were in 1898 51,000 breweries in the world. Germany is, of course, first on the list, with England and the United States second and third respectively.

M. Pousset, the founder of several noted drinking places in Paris, who died recently, bequeathed about $200,000 to the 12 oldest customers of his first establishment, whose patronage caused his success.

The former companions of Mark Twain's boyhood in Monroe county, Mo., cannot understand Mark's popularity. They say he was the dullest boy in the county school, and the laziest one in the neighborhood.

Philip D. Armour, Chicago's richest citizen, employs 12,000 persons, pays $6,000,000 or $7,000,000 yearly in wages, owns 4000 railway cars, which are used in transporting his goods, and has 700 or 800 horses to haul his wagons.

Quaint old customs still survive in many parts of England. In Ely Place, Holborn, a watchman cries the hours nightly with the same formula in use for centuries past: Past 1 o'clock, and a cold, wet morning.

A man caught a large bass at Centreville, Mich., the other day, in an unusual way. He was sawing ice on a pond, when the point of the saw struck the fish, which, impaled on the point of the instrument, was unable to escape.

The vital statistics of the State of New Jersey for 1898 report the number of people married in Camden during the year as 17,178, nearly all of whom were residents of Pennsylvania, who crossed the Delaware river to escape the provisions of the marriage license law.

During a two-mile run a trolley-car at Orange, N. J., struck an express wagon and knocked the driver out, overtook the same wagon a mile further on and again ran into it, collided with a loaded coal wagon and a butcher wagon.

William T. Walters, the art connoisseur, of Baltimore, throws open his art gallery to the public each autumn, charging a nominal admission fee, which is devoted to charity. A large sum is raised in this way for the poor each year.

Elmore F. Jenks, of Brooklyn, who has achieved some notoriety of late from almost completely recovering from a broken neck, expects to resume his business this spring. His case is a singular one and has attracted much attention.

The rapid fading of the lettering of the original copy of the Declaration of Independence has determined the State Department to withdraw the instrument from public exhibition in the Department library and substitute a fac simile.

Statistics prepared in Paris show that the proportion of novels to serious works read in the public libraries of the municipalities is less than 33 per hundred. Of 1,585,000 volumes circulated from the district library rooms, only 517,000 were novels. Alexandre Dumas' works are the most called for.

DO YOU?

BY W. W. L.

Do you remember the old, old days,
The dear old days by the restless sea,
The waves of blue and the fairy grot,
Now hidden forever from you and me?

Do you remember the love we pledged,
The songs we sang, the words we said,
As the sun went down to his ocean couch,
And light died out in evening shade?

Where we once stood now alone I stand,
In the fading light of the setting sun;
With only the memory of your sweet face,
And the old fond love over and done.

SEAL HUNTING.

Setting the two spritsails, says a writer from the Pacific, and shipping the rudder, we stood away to the northward, sailing all day and all night before a gentle south-west breeze. The climate here is perfect during a great part of the year, and it is hard to say which is the most beautiful, day or night.

Under either brilliant starlight or with the almost daylight radiance of the moon, on the one hand the long smooth swell of the Pacific, and on the other the dim and hazy outline of majestic mountain or silent forest, the picture was one that, once seen, is never forgotten, accompanied and driven into the memory as it was by the distant roar of the breakers on the beach.

At sunrise in the morning all were on the lookout for a seal; and before noon we saw a dark object motionless on the water, apparently half a mile away. The sail being taken down, the canoe was gently paddled towards the seal, which was asleep on the surface of the water; and the writer and one Siwash, each with a rifle in hand, crouched in the bow. Slowly we were paddled up until, when about one hundred and fifty yards away, the seal moved, and appeared to roll over. At once both of us fired, and our prey disappeared only to again come to the surface, splashing and rolling about.

The Siwash kept on working the "Magazine," much to our disgust. We could only hope that he was a bad marksman, and would therefore not plug the skin more than necessary. However, in a minute or two we were alongside, and had the prize safely on board. Then a somewhat unusual fresh breeze sprang up, and after an hour or two turned the smooth rollers into rather nasty crested seas for a deeply loaded canoe; and we were at length glad to step the foremast and run for the shelter of an island, on the lee side of which the canoe was beached in fairly smooth water and launched up.

As so far we had fed on dried salmon alone, we were glad to have a chance of making some bread. A hole two or three feet deep was scraped in the soil, and a big fire of fir-wood chopped out of the all-prevailing forest made over and in it. After the hole had filled up with red embers, and had become hot enough, it was carefully raked out; the flour, at once mixed with yeast powder and water into a dough without kneading, was wrapped up and put in; and in a short time the large loaf was ready, a good many pounds in weight. Primitive as the outfit is, the writer has never seen more wholesome bread turned out by city baker than that made in this manner by many a lonely lake and mountain in the far north-west.

Next day we again launched the canoe, and with a gentle fair wind, stood again to the north. Day after day and night after night passed, always the same soft wind, the ever blue sky, the bright sun overhead by day, and the silver moon at night. All day the shore on our starboard hand rose high and rocky; the lower sides of the hills, covered with dark-green fire, with a dividing line of white surf where the dark foliage met the deep blue of the sea, the only difference between day and night being the softened outlines and grayer colors during the latter.

This was very pleasant; but as seven or eight days passed before we killed our second seal, asleep on the surface like the first, it was by no means profitable business; and as the provisions were getting low, we had reluctantly to turn the canoe's head southward with only two skins aboard. A sealskin on the animal is very different from the same made up into a jacket or mantle. In its natural state it is covered with a long and rather coarse hair, which is either cut off or pulled out by the furriers before the soft and glossy appearance of the made-up article can be obtained.

As the wind had drawn round to the south-east, and as the canoes will not turn to windward under sail, we had to take down our masts and settle down to steady hard labor, paddling all day dead to windward, and all night too, unless we could get ashore under the lee of an island.

Under these circumstances, the time passed tediously enough, and no one was in the best of tempers, until, when nearly home, and pretty well worn out, one day, when driving the canoe through a little frothy head sea, a seal suddenly came up within fifty yards of her. All of us had been used to quick shooting at deer rushing through the thick bush; and the paddles were tossed into the boat and rifles grasped instead in the course of a second or two, and before the seal had time to see us, two bullets—one in his head and the other through the body—stretched him out, an ungainly object, close alongside.

The wind freshening still, and there being no place where a landing could be made, we had to steadily slave away with the paddle; and after nearly thirty hours of almost uninterrupted labor, we reached the mouth of the river we had left. The wind being partly off the land, and the surf running, of course, with us, we came through quite dry, and were delighted to stretch our aching backs and arms, and to camp at night in the then, to us, luxurious though flea haunted rancherie, instead of on the damp flooring of a rolling canoe.

As the skins are only worth from twelve to fourteen dollars each, it will easily be seen that the trip was not a great financial success; but for any lover of nature, a similar voyage along this beautiful and almost untrodden coast, with the great snow-capped mountain rising over the coast ranges, its lonely, dense forests, and wonderful deep fiords, seen under the almost unchanging blue sky, would form an experience not to be forgotten in a lifetime.

Grains of Gold.

To be trusted is a greater compliment than to be loved.

His thoughts can't be wrong whose life is in the right.

Every generation of man is a laborer for that which succeeds it.

Self-respect governs morality; respect for others governs our behavior.

Some minds fade at last, but this is rare; more rust out than fade out.

Search for truth is the noblest occupation of man; its publication a duty.

A man's greatest enemies are those which come out of his own mouth.

Malice and hatred are very fretting, and make our minds sore and uneasy.

The man who would have done so and so if he had been there, never gets there.

Our grand business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand.

To be wicked and stick to it means to invite desolation and death, no matter how much it may promise life.

If thou canst not make thyself such an one as thou wouldst, how canst thou expect to have another in all things to thy liking?

It may sometimes look as though the bad man were having a very good time in this world, but every dish on his table has poison in it.

Tell me no more of your unbeliefs. I have enough of my own. But if you know anything, if you have discovered any truth, let me share it with you.

Femininities.

In England the average weight of woman is 125 lbs.

A fair test and measure of civilization is the influence of good women.

Woman may be the weaker vessel, but it's always the husband that's broke.

"Johnny, do you know the ten commandments?" "Well, only by sights."

If you know how to spend less than you get you have the philosopher's stone.

A young lady makes Shakspeare say, "An eye like ma's, to threaten and command."

The secret of success in life is for a man to be ready for his opportunity when it comes.

Maud: "Why do you call that ring a war relic?" Ethel: "I won it in my first engagements."

A couple were married on horseback at Wilkesboro, N. C., recently, under the American flag.

Nell: "What are you reading?" Belle: "A Model Man. It's dreadfully stupid." Nell: "Yes; they usually are."

Mrs. Henry Young, of Pensacola, Florida, aged 40 years, is reported to have recently given birth to her 24th child.

Priscilla: "A girl never marries her first love." Prunella: "No; she's lucky, indeed, if she cannot marry her twenty-first, nowadays."

Sir Edwin Arnold has estimated that about 30,000 young women in England are attempting to win fame and fortune by writing so-called poetry.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich, being told the other day that a Boston blue-stocking had called him effeminate, retorted: "So I am, compared with her."

Men do not give up their seats to women in the public conveyances in London and Paris. They might be so polite if called upon, but laws of both cities forbid passengers to stand.

In a Scotch asylum there is a woman whose one form of insanity before she was incarcerated consisted in having her horse's shoes of solid gold with gold nails, each set of shoes and nails costing $2500.

A young girl, described as very beautiful, is said to be performing remarkable cures of serious maladies among the residents of Turos, Mexico, and vicinity, where they call her Saint Anita, merely by laying her hands on the sufferers.

Temperance women of Norway asked the public authorities a short time ago to make it unlawful for women or girls to serve in public houses. The request has been granted and at present an ale house keeper cannot employ any other woman than his own wife.

There is a very quaint and very original fashion now in vogue with our Australian cousins, and from it we might with advantage borrow an idea. During afternoon calls, grapes artistically grouped in the daintiest of baskets wreathed in vine leaves are handed round among visitors by way of refreshment, and the dissipation goes by the name of a "grape tea."

Pastor Gottschalk, of the British Foundling House in Hong Kong, says the price of marriageable girls among the Chinese has gone up until a girl of 14 or 16 can scarcely be purchased for less than $100—a price, as he pathetically observes, "poor people can ill afford"—and as there is a Chinese superstition that a foundling girl makes an ill-fated wife, the institution he represents does not benefit by the situation referred to.

A resolution in favor of birching bad boys instead of sending them to prison has been sent to the British Home Secretary, signed by a number of Magistrates. The proposition is to birch boys under sixteen for all offences, at the discretion of the Magistrate. The judicious use of the birch, it is believed, would not only have a more salutary effect, but would save the boys from acquiring the prison taint, losing their dread of the prison, and sinking deeper into crime.

A year ago 230 ladies in St. Andrew's church, Kingston, Ontario, were given $1 each to turn to the best account and return the proceeds in January, 1894. On Monday night the cash was summed up and the trustees were amazed to have $2318 placed in their hands. Mrs. Mackie, wife of the pastor, made the greatest gain. Her dollar realized $160. The Rev. Mr. Grant, as an expression of admiration of the lady's success, wrote out a check for $160 more. The ladies will work the scheme again, and have set $4000 as the amount needed.

The changes in handwriting, due to style, not to individuality, are a curious study. Up to and through the middle of the century women's script was what Holmes describes as "delicate, thready characters which slant across the page like an April shower with a south wind chasing it." In the last quarter during the seventies appeared the immensely large and strikingly angular hand. The angular part died out, but the size remained until the last decade, which has introduced another mode. That is the small and queer—odd and distinctive as possible. Not women alone, but men—some men—adopt the change.

Masculinities.

Transparent leather is one of the latest inventions in Paris.

He who is firm and resolute in will molds the world to himself.

The man who lives only for himself is engaged in very small business.

Senator Palmer's wife lunches daily with him in the Senate restaurant.

Ask a man how to define injustice and he will tell how others are treating him.

When a friend turns out not to be a trump, then is the time to discard him.

Just before playing, Paderewski holds his fingers for some minutes in warm water.

The Chinese have a superstitious dread of black and blue, but regard red as a lucky color.

We cannot control the evil tongues of others, but a good life enables us to despise them.

My son, observe the postage stamp. Its usefulness depends upon its ability to stick to one thing till it gets there.

A bill has been introduced in the Iowa Legislature prohibiting newspapers from publishing the details of prize fights.

A Miss Straight assists in keeping the accounts in that condition in the office of the Register of Deeds of Bourbon county, Kansas.

Continued cigarette smoking is said to have caused Frank Fitzgerald, of Marlborough, N. Y., to lose his eyesight. He is totally blind.

A strenuous movement by the Saloon Keepers' Association of Chicago for the abolition of the free lunch has met with signal failure.

The private life of one man shall be a more illustrious monarchy, more formidable to its enemy, more sweet and serene in its influence to its friends, than any kingdom in history.

After an absence of 31 years, John Watson, a member of the Tenth Kentucky Regiment in the late war, returned to his family at Harrisburg, Ky. He found his wife remarried.

Mme. Marie Rose is said by an English paper to put goloshes on her King Charles spaniel when she takes him out for a walk—two pairs with nice soft kid tops and gutta percha soles.

William Milhallin, of Springfield, O., while suffering with the grippe a short time ago, was suddenly seized with a fit of hiccoughing, which continued for 70 hours, finally resulting in his death.

Queen Victoria has a fondness for relics of her girlhood, and to this day, for example, uses to cut the pages of new books an ivory paper cutter that was given to her when she was a little princess.

The ingenuity of the fellow who personated a gamekeeper and attempted to collect a fine from a party of New York sportsmen in Florida, for shooting alligators out of season, would do credit to a New York bunco sharp.

Of 500 men who applied for relief at St. Paul recently, 448 refused to saw wood in payment therefor. A remarkable prevalence of rheumatism and other disabilities manifested itself as soon as the buck-saw was mentioned.

A New York barber, charitably inclined, who gives free shaves to the unemployed for two hours every afternoon, acts on the sensible theory that a clean-shaven man of tidy appearance will stand a better chance of getting work.

In Florida the cucumber is regarded as an excellent bee plant. It is said bees favor it, and that the honey gathered from cucumber flowers is of first-class quality. Cucumber pollen is also said to be a favorite with the honey bee.

The Rev. Dr. Scarrow, of Russell, Kansas, within one week recently, held services for a man whose body was totally consumed by fire, for a man who died in the penitentiary, for a murdered man, and finally over the bodies of three murderers lynched by a mob.

London's Thirteen Club, at a recent dinner, had 13 dishes on the menu, salt cellars were emptied about on the tablecloth with studied carelessness, the chairman broke a large mirror and each guest a small one, and, to cap the climax, only cross-eyed waiters were employed.

Nelson P. Nelson, a wealthy philanthropist, of St. Louis, recently dressed himself like a tramp, applied for assistance at the office of a charitable society, used the ticket he received for soup and lodging and gained a great deal of inside information from the real unfortunates whom he encountered.

The three St. Clair county, Missouri, Judges, Copenhaver, Lyons and Nevitt, who were sent to jail ten months ago for refusing to order a tax levy to pay for the bonds of an unbuilt railway, are still in prison, and have been ever since, except when on short leaves home or holding court, by permission of the Federal Judge. And the wrangle seems no nearer settlement.

LATEST FASHION PHASES.

Gowns of soft friar's gray bengaline, camel's hair, or sacking, have skirts with plainly-gored fronts and organ-pleated back breadths that just escape the ground. The princesse coat, somewhat shortened, has ample sleeves, a deep Vandyke collarette that ends in a revers point in front, and is simply edged all around the skirt and coat with rows of gray silk gimp. Most of these costumes are gray throughout. A few, however, have a touch of delicate color, showing on the vest frequently a narrow shirred plastron of yellow or rose crepon, or crepe de Chine of an exquisite violet tint, with a suggestion of the same color on the toque or bonnet.

It is quite surprising the hold sequins have taken on fashionable fancy as a trimming for elaborate evening gowns. Judiciously applied, these glittering discs are effective, and on certain toilets in good taste, but careful discrimination is essential to elegance. Very handsome was a much-gored, white, brocaded silk, all the seams on the front and sides being very closely overlaid with whitemetal sequins of small size. The edges of the bodice were correspondingly outlined. Fine, gold discs are similarly utilized, but it is quite possible to vulgarize a dress of very elegant fabric while decorating it with sequins. An effective ball toilet of pale-green crepe de Chine has the skirt seams striped with green velvet ribbon, overlaid with lapping, dangling sequins of gold, green and silver sequins with a fringe of the same at the end of each seam.

Tailor-made shirt-waists of pink linen, embroidered pique, and fancy cotton fabrics are displayed among other premature novelties of the spring season.

Rhinestone ornaments of every shape and size are extensively used upon handsome hats, bonnets, toques, and evening toilets sent from Paris.

The leading colors for spring capes for general wear are black, green, the darker browns, and a rich deep shade of blue.

In new spring jackets models for middle-aged women remain of three-quarter length; for youthful wearers, from twenty-four to twenty-six inches is the desired length, the designs, as a rule, being double-breasted and tight-fitting in the back. Black watered silk is used on very many models for revers and collarette, and the sleeves are simply enormous. Braiding is used with elegant effect on coat accessories and vests, but a model thus finished costs as much as a silk lined velvet one.

Crepe of every sort is promised a very successful season.

All sorts of variations of the mutton-leg sleeve still maintain. Every dressmaker improves her own most novel successes. The tight sleeve fitting the arm as far as the elbow, and met there with an enormous puff drooping from the shoulder, is almost invariably formed of two materials, the upper part silk, brocade or velvet. Many modistes drape the drooping chatelaine puff. Just a few of the quaint 1840 sleeves are shown tucked in snugly about the arm at the top and flaring out excessively toward the elbow. All manner of Empire sleeves with a single or double puff at the top are very advantageous for remodeling handsome dresses. An effective sleeve for a dressy toilet drapes in a puff at the top, and falls thence in a deep frill of lace caught up on the inside of the arm. The Marie Antoinette model has lace frills falling from the elbow, and the Venetian sleeve has a slashed puff at the top showing glimpses of contrasting color. The effect is obtained by lining the puff itself with satin, and draping it on a close sleeve beneath.

New changeable dress goods show magenta or beet-root red prominently. In silks they are trimmed with black lace and rosettes, or Valkyrie bows of satin ribbon. Striped black and white silks are finished with satin sleeves of immense size, and at the hem of the skirt is a small single full ruche of the satin shirred many times through the centre, leaving a full crisp frill each side.

A pretty changeable blue and brown serge has a gored skirt with a Spanish flounce set on to the depth of the knee with a standing tiny frill. The wide flounce has three rows of serpentine mohair braid. The round waist has short wide revers and armhole ruffles of black satin antique, with folded belt and draped collar.

From Paris come rumors that for millinery purposes laces will be used from the narrowest widths up to those which measure 12, 15 and 20 inches, composing in many cases the hat entire.

Gold laces in combination with straw effects in many fanciful designs in narrow widths for summer millinery will figure prominently.

Gauffred laces, called Bohemian Point, is a novelty designed for general trimmings, flouncings, berthas, shoulder-capes, etc. It consists of a black silk novelty net in three different widths, from 6 to 14 inches. To this solid piece of net, one, two or three rows of flouncings in gauffred or plaited effect are attached. This effect is produced by heavy perpendicular cords in each flounce.

A lesson which might with advantage be learned is to read old prints—pictures of fashions in the days of the Stuarts. There were then a number of quaint modes whose excellence time never has withered. The drapery of a fichu, the fold of a pannier, the turn of a collar and the twist of a hat provide one with inspiration many times. These old world notions are particularly useful in the designing of children's frocks and for one's own garments as well, which to be joys to oneself and to others should be unlike those of the rest of the world.

Odds and Ends.

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

Palm Pancakes.—Well beat three fresh eggs, then mix three tablespoonfuls of dry flour with a pint of new milk; pass it through a sieve on to the eggs. Put half an ounce of lard into a clean frying-pan, and, when it is quite hot, pour in a little batter as thin as possible. Scatter over it some finely-minced candied citron-peel; then cover with more batter as thin as before. Fry a light brown. Serve very hot with half-lemons. The pancakes must be not larger than the palm of the hand.

Boiled Chicken.—Fasten the pinions of the chicken over the back; draw the legs into the body through a slit in the skin, and hold in place with a skewer. Stuff the fowl in the same manner as for roasting; sew up in a cloth that is well dredged with flour to keep it whole, and plunge it into hot water. While boiling, season with salt and pepper, and boil an hour or more. Serve with egg-sauce. Oysters dropped may be added to the dressing for either boiled or roasted chicken, or beaten egg may be added.

Simnel Cake for Easter.—Three pounds of flour, one pound of butter, one and a half pound of sugar, quarter of a pound of golden sirup, two and a half pounds of currants, one pound of raisins, half a pound of candied-peel, six eggs, one ounce of carbonate of soda, half a pound of almonds, some nutmeg and a little cinnamon, half a pint of milk. Beat the butter to a cream, then add the sugar, flour, sirup, and spice gradually. Dissolve the soda in the milk, made lukewarm; then add the fruit, milk, and almonds, which must be blanched and used whole. Mix all thoroughly and bake in tins or rings on a baking sheet, lined with buttered paper, in rather a slow oven.

Salt Fish.—Take great care with soaking of the fish, for it is on this that its goodness depends. Change the water frequently, and finally let it soak either in skim-milk or milk-and-water, and do not forget to place the fish flesh-side downwards in the water. Now boil it, and serve either with eggs or anchovy or tomato sauce. When any is left over, it makes delicious rissoles, croustades, or fish pie, and is not to be despised aux fines herbes. For this chop finely some chives, green spring onion, or a shallot, with some parsley; toss this all in fresh butter, with some essence of anchovy, cayenne pepper, and either lemon or Seville orange juice. After a little add the fish with a little more butter, and let it cook gently until tender.

Tapioca Jelly.—Choose the larger sort of tapioca, wash it carefully in several waters, then soak it in cold fresh water for five or six hours, and simmer until quite clear. Add lemon-juice, wine, and sugar to taste, and boil a little piece of the peel with the jelly; the peel should be removed afterwards.

Tasty Supper Dish.—Make some puff paste, roll it out, and cut it into squares of about three inches. Beat the yelks of two eggs, add a little made mustard, a dash of cayenne pepper, and two full teaspoonfuls of grated Parmesan cheese to form a thick paste; place a spoonful of this mixture in the centre of each little square of pastry; pull the four points to the centre, pinching them together to make them stand up. Bake for ten minutes, arrange on a napkin-covered dish, and serve very hot.

Sweetbread Salad.—Boil the sweetbreads till tender, throw them into cold water for a few moments. Dry them; cut them into small pieces. Have ready some crisp celery, about as much as the sweetbreads, cut them into small pieces. Add this to the sweetbreads, and over all pour mayonnaise dressing, flavored slightly with a dash of onion.

Bottles and Vases.—Water bottles and vases that become discolored and dirty should have a raw potato cut in bits and put inside with a tablespoonful each of salt and washing soda and two of water. Shake well and rinse in clear water.

From the North to the South Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup is the preventive of colds.

CONCERNING CHIVALRY.

It was in the days of Edward the Third that chivalry is supposed to have reached its highest perfection in that country. The figures of the Black Prince, and that "Flower of Chivalry," Sir John Chandos, stand forth as bright and shining examples of what the peerless knight was or ought to have been. Only men do not swear by Froissart now as they used to do, and Green ridicules his pictures of Chivalry as "picturesque mimicry." The Black Prince's chivalry, at any rate, did not prevent him from treating the people he conquered with all the savagery of a brutal nature.

The truth seems to be this, that chivalry was an ideal of perfection, of all that was noble and graceful and worthy in human nature, framed in accordance with the standards of the times. It never, at any period of its existence, realized the full worth and purity of the ideal; but then what form of society or code of manners does?

Even the ideal was lost long before Caxton published "The Book of the Order of Chyvalry," with the object of stirring the gentlemen of his time to deeds of derring-do. "How many knights are there now in England," he asked, in 1484, "that have the use and exercise of a knight, that is to say, that he knoweth his horse and his horse that is according and broken after its kind, his armor and harness meet and fitting?"

"The exercises of chivalry are not used and honored," he complains, "as they were in ancient time, when the noble acts of the knights of England that used chivalry were renowned through the universal world. O! ye knights of England, where is the custom and usage of noble chivalry? What do ye now but go to the baine to play at dice? Leave this, leave it, and read the noble volumes of St. Graal, of Launcelot, of Tristram, of Galahad, of Perceval, of Gawayn, and many more! There shall ye see manhood, courtesy, and gentilness."

But Caxton applied the spur in vain. Gunpowder had begun the work of destruction which the schoolmaster completed, and the Order of Chivalry was as dead as Cleopatra. Of course one does not forget Sir Philip Sidney, the chivalrous soldier, Spenser, the chivalrous poet, and Bayard, the chevalier without fear and without reproach. But you cannot construct an Order out of an occasional figure, or you must follow the Order of Chivalry to Khartoum, and bury it sorrowfully with the body of Charles Gordon.

The schoolmaster, as we say, completed the destruction begun by gunpowder—what room for knightly courage was there before a smoking tube, beyond the reach of sword and lance?—but there were other contributory causes. In this country the Wars of the Roses, and in France the Wars with the Huguenots, aided effectually in abolishing what remained of chivalry as an institution.

Think for a moment what the Wars of the Roses cost England. The slain during thirty years included some eighty-five thousand private soldiers of a generation in which the feudal instinct still survived in strength greater than was inherited by their children. But the death-roll also included two kings, one earl, thirty lords, one hundred and thirty knights, and four hundred and fifty esquires. What aristocracy in the world could stand such a blow as that within a lifetime, without completely altering its character? It was reserved for James the First, however, to destroy the glory of knighthood by selling the "honor" to all who were willing and able to pay for it.

Puritanism, says Buckle, killed chivalry—which also is true to some extent. Yet it is needful to remember that the religious association and moral aspect of chivalry have always attracted religious teachers.

The Order of Chivalry died, covered with ridicule; and it probably never deserved much of the praise and glory it has received. But the spirit of chivalry exists, and is for all the time—in spite of the fears of Mr. Robert Buchanan. The fashion of its expression must change with time and manners, and we must not look for it in obsolete forms. It is no longer necessary for a man to show his reverence for woman by making an ass of himself, nor need he now ride abroad in search of human wrongs to redress. The work of the modern knight-errant lies at his own door; and surely there never was an age when the spirit of philanthropy was larger or more earnest than it is now. A knight, according to Caxton, ought to be charitable, and everything virtuous should adorn his character; he ought to be truthful, and to do nothing below the dignity of a gentleman. The same obligations exist now, when, as Hallam says, the character of a knight is represented in that of a gentleman. Certainly the position of woman is vastly superior in these later days, when chivalry is expressed in courtesy, and the position of the "masses" was never so good as now, when knight-errantry is represented by the social reformer.

PROSECUTOR—"What reasons can you give for thinking that this lady did not intend to hit her husband when she threw the sugar bowl at him?" Witness—"Well, she hit him."

We heard a mechanic say that he would not be without Salvation Oil. It kills pain.

Do you want to laugh? get that inimitable book "Samantha at Saratoga" and you can't help laughing. In that book "Josiah Allen's Wife," in a vein of strong common sense, yet pure and innocent as a child, keeps the reader crammed with the sharpest hits and funniest observations spiced with stinging sarcasm and flavored with sound moral lessons, as she takes off, in her inimitable, mirth-provoking style, the Follies, Flirtations, Pug Dogs, Low-Neck Dressing, Water Craze, Josiah's Perversities, Tobogganing, Roller-Skating, and a thousand other curious things that one of her keen sense of the humorous discovers in That World of Gayety at Saratoga. It is indeed the funniest book yet. See offer on another page.

FLEET MAIL-CARRIERS.—The Indian runners are familiar figures in Mexico. They are employed by the government to carry the mails among the Sierra Nevada mountains, and make better time than any animal that could be employed. A runner will carry from twenty to thirty pounds of mail, and never be delayed by "washouts" or swollen streams. He is always on an easy run that must carry him along at the rate of six or seven miles an hour at least. He is nearly always dressed in white cotton cloth, which makes him a conspicuous figure against the sombre green and black tints of the high mountain levels, and which, late in the evening, causes him to look like a ghost or spectre flitting among the pines and firs and moss-covered boulders strewn along the trail. The trails, on the steep places, wind backward and forward in stretches from fifty to seventy-five yards in length, in order to find a grade up which a heavy-laden pack-mule can make his way. But the athletic carrier does not run the whole length of these windings in descending a hill. He cuts off the corners at each bend by placing his hand on the edge of the trail and vaulting to the lower level whenever the two levels are not more than six or seven feet apart. All this time he never gives up the little dog-trot that is carrying him forward so rapidly and surely. The carrier will in half an hour go down a mountain side that would take the best mule in a bullion train or the fleetest one ridden by the little Mexican caballero, the best rider in the world, half a day to accomplish. In ascending, too, the carrier has methods of taking shorter cuts up steeper inclines, so as to gain time and distance at every turn.

"THIS parrot, ma'am," said the dealer, "is one that I can recommend. It was in the family of a clergyman for many years." "Well, gents, what'll ye have? Name your pizen," shrieked the parrot with startling emphasis. "He was obliged to part with it, however," continued the dealer with an apologetic cough, "and for the last year or two it has belonged to the Alderman from our ward."

BRIGHT EYES

—AND—

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THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

726 Sansom St., Phila., Pa.

STRIKE IN A DOMESTIC CIRCLE.

He was an American walking delegate, and he never tired of talking of the strike. He held that it was justifiable if ever a strike was, and he was prepared to demonstrate that it was perfectly proper to strike for any desired result. He told his wife so, and she seemed to agree with him. She said it seemed to be the easiest way of enforcing a demand. And that night, when he came home, he found that the table was not set.

"I want a new dress," she said, when he asked what the trouble was.

"I know. You've been bothering me for that dress for a month," he said. "But how about supper?"

"There isn't any," she replied; "this is a strike."

"A strike."

"Yes—a general tie-up. I've been trying to secure a peaceful settlement of this trouble for some time, but now I mean to enforce my rights."

"Mary, do you dare——"

"Oh, don't talk to me in that way! If I can't get you to arbitrate, why, I've got to strike. I don't care if it does block the wheels of trade."

"But, Mary, you don't understand!"

"Oh, yes, I do! I've made my demands, and they've been refused. I've asked for arbitration, with a view to compromise, and that has also been refused. A strike is all that there is left, and I've struck."

"But your demands are unreasonable."

"I don't think they are."

"You're no judge."

"You're the judge of your own demands when you strike, and I'm just as good a judge as you are when I want something. It's of no use talking; this strike is on."

She folded her arms in a determined way, and he subsided. It was perhaps half an hour later when he looked up and asked—

"Mary, is the strike still on?"

"It is still on," she replied.

"Aren't you hungry?"

"No. I saw that I had something in the treasury before the strike was ordered."

"Meaning the pantry?" he asked.

"Meaning the pantry," she returned.

"I believe I'll get a bite," he said.

"It's locked," she replied. "The reserve is to be used simply to keep the strike going. You can't touch the striker's resources."

"Be careful, Mary!" he said warningly.

"If I shut off the cash——"

She laughed and nodded towards the pantry.

"I can stick it out a week," she returned.

Five or ten minutes later he proposed that they should compromise on the basis of ten dollars.

"Twenty," she replied firmly.

"But that means ruin," he protested. "I can't afford it."

"That's your business," she answered. "I offered to arbitrate once."

It was ten o'clock that night when he finally gave in; and somehow he felt that he had experienced a new phase of the strike business. It looked different from the other side of the fence.

IN ONE ACT.

The other girls had been talking about her, and when she came in, smiling and a little self-conscious, they clustered eagerly about her.

"Did he leave you at the door?" queried the girl with the slim waist.

"Shall we call him 'John' or 'Jack'?" asked the girl with the black eyes.

"Oh, do tell me, did he kiss you before or after he proposed?" fluttered the girl with the straight nose.

"Oh, girls, I——"

"Did he say he had never proposed to a girl before?"

"Of course he did—why, the marriage positively wouldn't be legal if he didn't say that when he proposed."

"Did he say that he loved as man never loved woman before?"

"Did he go about asking your father as if he had ever done it before?"

"Oh, girls, you——"

"I knew you were engaged by the way in which you took his arm last evening."

"And I knew it by the fact that he did not go away to smoke with the other men after dinner."

"When did he first——"

"Do tell us what he——"

"Girls, girls, I——"

"Does Gertie make you leave the drawing-room to her now that you are engaged?"

"How did you manage to look surprised when he——"

"Oh, dear, you——"

"Girls, she has her ring already; she is hiding her left hand."

"Oh, oh, how lovely!"

"Isn't it sweet. He must love you awfully to give you a ring like that," cried the girl with the black eyes.

"He selected the stone and had it set after a design of his own," said the newly-affianced, blushing. "He said I should not have one just like anyone else."

"How lovely of him! Did you ask the jeweler how much it is worth?" asked the girl with the straight nose. "Susie pretended that hers was too large, and took it back on purpose to find out how much Wilson had paid for it, and, would you believe it, he hadn't bought it at the place he told her!"

"How mean!" cried the girl with the slim waist; "he knew she would do that, did it on purpose so that she shouldn't know what he paid for it."

"Of course; men are so sly."

"But wasn't that lovely of Jack? I am sure a man with a moustache like that would make a delightful lover."

"But, Effie, how did he know the size?"

"Oh, he borrowed one of my rings. Of course, I knew what it was for, though I pretended not. I was awfully glad that he did not select the one that Phil gave me."

"I should think so! But aren't you afraid that it will be stolen?"

"Yes, indeed; I keep that hand under the pillow at night."

"Well, a ring like that is positively economical; it is such a saving in gloves," said the girl with the black eyes.

"Yes, indeed; but what I like best is the fact that no one else ever had one like it."

As she spoke the newly-affianced walked over to the girl with the golden hair, who had all this time been looking idly out of the window.

"Don't you want to see my ring, Annie?" she asked, with a note of triumph in her voice.

"Thanks dear," was the smiling reply. "I am glad you like it so much. By the way, you must be very careful of it; the setting is not very secure—I lost the stone once or twice while I was wearing it last year."

Then, in the midst of a silence which could be felt, she turned again to the window.

HIDDEN MERIT.—Natural modesty keeps many a valuable man in the shade. How can he correctly estimate h is own abilities or be sure that the world stands in need of them? He sees so many instances of people who over-rate themselves, and rush into conspicuousness only to find that they had nothing worth offering after all, that he may well cherish for himself that reticence which hesitates to push his own powers or performances into notice. Nevertheless the calculable loss to the world which thus ensues may in great measure be prevented by men and women of a different type. For, if there are some who are distinguished by their powers of performance, there are others who are equally distinguished by their powder of bringing merit into notice. There is a large class who are rich in resources, in executive talent, in the organizing power, in that knowledge of the world which enables them to detect its needs and to supply them, to discover special gifts and abilities, and to direct them into needed channels. This power is as much an endowment as any other, and brings with it its own duties and responsibilities.

SELF-DEVELOPMENT.—Most of us set ourselves apart in the matter of opinions of every kind, cherishing only the society of those who agree with us, and shrinking from those who represent an opposite phase of thought. Speaking of such a one, James Martineau says, "He finds his own feelings repeated, his own tastes confirmed, his own judgments defended, his own type of wisdom reproduced, and, becoming an adept in the characteristics of his order, he misses the perfection of his nature. How completely this association by sympathy has taken the place of association by difference is plain to all who look upon the world with open eyes." Yet it is the very opposite course we need, both for self-developement and for usefulness to society.

HUMAN THOUGHT AND HUMAN LABOR.—If there is any great truth which is daily forcing itself upon the world, it is that all human labor is valuable in proportion as it is vitalized by thought and directed by intelligence. All the results of mere motion are being compassed by machinery. Steam and electricity are easily performing what millions of hands could never accomplish; yet nothing has ever yet been found as a substitute for human thought, and whatever task a man or woman undertakes will be poorly and meanly done if not thus inspired and guided.

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CHILDREN are entitled (if under sixteen years) in almost all cases where there was no widow, or she has since died or remarried.

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Humorous.

THE OLD-FASHIONED PLAN.

The "sturdy oak and clinging vine" are out of fashion now;
The modern maiden stands alone, with triumph on her brow.
She buffets bravely with the world, she fares as best she can,
And gayly makes her way through life without the help of man.
Her broken yoke of servitude she tramples 'neath her feet,
Her ancient tyrant she defies and finds her freedom sweet.

Yet sometimes, when the road is hard, and things look rather black,
The independent woman's thoughts insist on barking back.
The sheltered life seems very fair amid earth's crowding ills,
And restful the old-fashioned plan—a man to pay the bills!

—S. G. L.

Can't hold a candle to it—Gunpowder.

A hen is a very superior creature, but she could never lay a corner-stone.

"How to make both ends meet." Have sheep's head and ox-tail soup for dinner, same course.

The man didn't know how it sounded when he said: "I'll believe there's a hell when I see it."

Robby: "Aunty, what do they call the man who hunts up the taxes?"

Aunt Sarah: "Taxidermist, uv course, bekase he skins everybody."

Lawyer: "But you don't regard money as in any way taking the place of a wife." Complainant, breach of promise: "I don's know. Money talks."

Mrs. Consol: "I know you feel bad, but time will heal all wounds."

Mrs. Newwed: "I hope so. The way I feel now I could never marry again!"

Aunty: "What a lot of pretty dolls you have." Niece: "Yes'm, they is real pretty; but I do have so much trouble wiz dem. Sometimes I fink they must be all boys."

The reformed cannibal: "So your name is Goodpastor, is it? It may interest you to know that I served your grandfather."

Young missionary: "In what way?"

Reformed cannibal: "Fricasseed."

In South America. Tourist: "Could not some of these disputes be settled by arbitration?"

Native: "Mere waste of time. We could finish ten revolutions in the time required for one arbitration."

Snobb: "Jobson has produced a comic opera which, he says, he thinks all the clergy will commend."

Bobbs: "Everything highly moral, eh?"

"Yes; all the high kicks of the ballet are directed at the heavy villain."

X: "She didn't love him, but she married him."

Q.: "Did she pretend to love him?"

X.: "Oh, yes!"

Q.: "Does she still pretend to love him?"

X.: "Of course not. There's no need of that now since they are married."

Peacemaker: "I wouldn't fight, my good men."

First combatant: "He called me a liar, sir."

Second combatant: "And he called me a lazy loafer."

Peacemaker: "Well, I wouldn't fight over a difference of opinion; you both may be right."

Mother: "Is Mr. Kissem in the parlor yet?"

Little son: "Yes."

"What are they doing?"

"They is sitting a good ways apart and talking, but sister has taken off her Elizabeth ruff."

"Very well; I'll go down at once."

A well-known writer of humorous prose and verse was talking with a bibliomaniac a week or so ago, when the latter said: "By the way, I am collecting first editions of American authors. I want to add your first book to my collection. Have you any copies of the first edition?" "Yes," answered the author, "I have all of them."

Mrs. Gabb, hostess: "Your little son does not seem to have much appetite."

Mrs. Gadd: "No; he's quite delicate."

Mrs. Gabb: "Can't you think of anything you'd like, my little man?"

Little man: "No'm. You see, mam made me eat a hull lot before we started, so I wouldn't make a pig of myself."

The grim humor of the camp waged eternal warfare on the general despondency, says General Gordon. On one occasion a prayer-meeting was held in camp, and one of the soldiers was called on to pray. "Oh, Lord," he said, "we are in the midst of a terrible battle, and in an awful lot of trouble. We hope you will take a proper view of the matter and give us the victory." In the midst of a battle the General saw a man running from a very close situation. "What are you running for?" demanded the General, in a stern voice. "Golly, General," said the fleeing man, "I'm running because I can't fly!"

PEOPLE WHO WEAR COSTLY WATCHES.—"Englishmen do not buy many of the very costly watches that are manufactured in the country," said a leading watchmaker to the writer.

"As a rule, they are bought by Americans, Russians, or Indian nobles, with whom expense is not a matter of importance. A little while ago a watch was made in London for an Indian prince which probably cost about $5 000 in all. It was a marvel of mechanical skill, and on the back of the case the Star of India was emblazoned in precious stones.

"Yes, it often takes several years to complete a complicated watch. There are thousands of delicate pieces of machinery to be made, and the watch, while in course of construction, has to pass through many hands. I have known a period of five years to elapse between the time that a watch was planned and the date of its completion.

"Here is a watch on which there is an enormous amount of labor. On your touching a spring it will chime the exact time to a minute. It also shows the day of the week and month, as well as the phases of the moon. A watch of that particular description costs $1,250 to produce."

PREPARING FOR THE STORM.—A correspondent in the North of Ireland sends the following account of an interesting incident that came under his observrtion.

Being on a walking tour through Inishowen, and passing along the edge of Lough Swilly—the romantic "Lake of Shadows"—he noticed an immense gathering of crows on the sandy shore.

In company with several others, the tourist was attracted by this novel spectacle, and began to wonder at the cause of it. An old man, who was working in a field near the place, offered an explanation. He said that the birds were picking up sand to ballast themselves in a storm, and that when they did so it was a sure sign of coming. He added that on shooting crows after a gathering of the sort he had found their crops loaded with sand.

As a matter of fact, the gentleman concludes, a violent gale set in early next morning.

WHERE RATS ARE UTILIZED.—Almost everywhere in the world, except in Paris, rats are considered as a troublesome nuisance to be got rid of by any many possible. The Parisians, on the contrary, convert this nuisance into a useful member of society, and a source of revenue.

In Paris rats are collected from every possible source and placed in the great pound, where the carcases of all animals dying in the city are thrown.

These remains are speedily disposed of by the rats, which leave behind nothing but the cleanly-picked bones. There are no such scavengers as rats.

About four times a year these rats are killed, and their skins are utilized in the everywhere-admired form of Parisian gloves to decorate the hands of loveliness the world over.

CHARITY.—There are not a few people the measure of whose charity seems to correspond with the distance at which it is exercised. Their imagination, scorning what is close to them, leaps over sea and land with the utmost celerity, and they easily sympathize with the sufferings and ignorance of far-distant natives and savage tribes. They willingly give their money or their time or their interest to relieve or to instruct such as these—and so far they are to be honored for it. But, when they are cold and deaf to the aching needs of their own country, to the tale of distress in the next street, and to the immediate claims of their own families, they may well be reminded that "charity begins at home."

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MRS. EDMONDSON GORTER.
Oak Lodge Thorpe,
Nov., 28, '93. Norwich, Norfolk, England.

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A. W. RUSSELL, U. S. N.

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Ex-Member of Congress, 5th District.

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4.10, 7.20 (two-hour train), 8.30, 9.45, 11.31 a m, (12.37, p m from 24th and Chestnut streets—Dining car), 1.30, 3.50, 5.15, (6.12 from 24th and Chestnut) 8.35, (dining car), p m, 12.10 night, Sundays—4.10, 8.00, 9.45, 11.31 a m, 3.50 p m, (6.12 from 24th and Chestnut, 8.35 (dining car) p m, 12.10 night.

Leave New York, foot of Liberty street, 4.30, 8.00, 9.00, 10.00, 11.30 a m, 1.30, 3.00, 4.00, 5.00, 6.00, 7.30, 8.45 p m, 12.15 night. Sundays, 8.30, 9.00, 11.30, a m, 1.30, 5.30, 7.30 p m, 12.15 night.

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